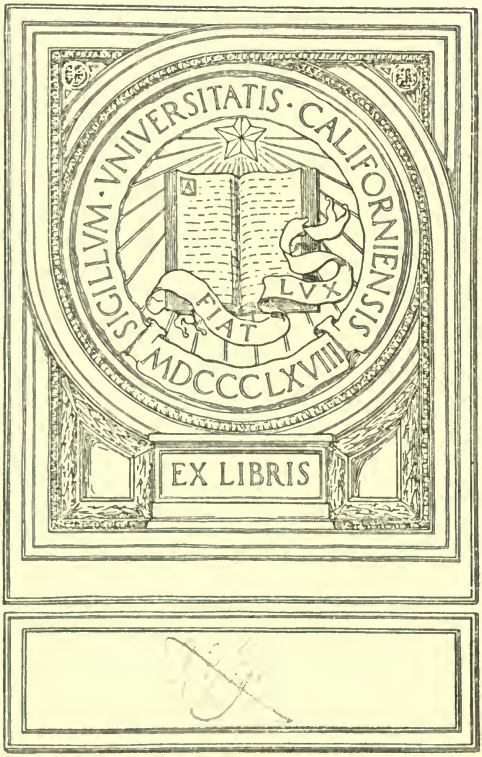
CHIMMIE FADDEN AND MR. PAUL

EDWARD W. TOWNSEND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Chimmie Fadden
and
Mr. Paul

Chimmie and Mr. Paul.

Illustrated by Albert Levering

Chimmie Fadden
and
Mr. Paul

By

Edward W. Townsend

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	Fashionable Sports	3
II	Soft Snaps	17
III	Of L'Aiglon and Woman	31
IV	The Widow's Automobile	53
V	Mr. Paul Instructs and Learns	67
VI	Sentiments and Incomes	79
VII	A Day Out With Duchess	93
VIII	A Tenement Thanksgiving	107
IX	A Study in Purple	121
X	The Horse Show	133
XI	An Ironing-Board in Politics	145
XII	Woman's Cunning	159
XIII	When Greek Meets Greek	175
XIV	The House Party	189
XV	At the Roseleaf Ball	203
XVI	Excise and International Politics	217

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVII	A Christmas Play	231
XVIII	The Status of Woman	245
XIX	A Family Skeleton	259
XX	At the Opera	273
XXI	A Drama and a Tragedy	287
XXII	The Wily Widow's Ruse	301
XXIII	The Little Duke Arrives	315
XXIV	Class Distinctions	329
XXV	Some Social Revolutions	343
XXVI	Kitchen and Other Cabinets	357
XXVII	Education and Proposals	371

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

CHIMMIE AND MR. PAUL . . . . . *Frontispiece*

"AT DAT DE WHOLE BAZOONUS DANCED DE COUCHY-COUCHY" 2

"'WHY DON'T YOU GET A JOB BOSSING DE GOVERNMENT,' I SAYS" 16

"DE DUCHESS WAS CRYING WIT RAGE 30

"WE MAKE HIM A PRESENT OF OUR DUST" . . 52

"AND MAKE DE SWEETEST COTILLION LEADER CHIEF OF POLICE," HE SAYS 66

"C'EST TOUT UN DRAME"! "I RUNNED ME LEGS OFF GIVING IT EXERCISE" 78

". . . AND LEAVES KEL WONDERING WEDDER IT WAS YESTERDAY, TO-DAY OR TO-MORROW" . 92

MRS. MURPHY'S MIGHT . . . OR . . . THE BALLADE OF MARTIN HALLIGAN'S AUNT . . . 106

THE EFFECT OF PURPLE ON WINE AND WIDOWS 120

"DE HUNTER CLASS IS SHOOTING ROUND DE RING AND DE HIGH JUMPER CLASS IS NEAR OUTTER SIGHT" 132

"PAUL, DRINK UP! CHAMES, GET OUT!" . . . 144

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

"I 'LL TANK YOU TO LEARN HIM HOW TO OPEN IT" 158

"AND HAD TO CHASE DERE AND SQUARE TINGS WIT DE CHIEF" 174

"DEY WAS N'T SAYING A WOID" 188

THE ROSELEAF BALL 202

"GET BUSY," HE SAYS, "OR I 'LL CHOP YOUR HEAD OFF" 216

"WHO 'LL DO ME PART?" I SAYS 230

"AND DE MAN SHE MAKES DAT HOME FOR SITS DERE ALL NIGHT, GAMBLING!" 244

"WELL, DAT 'S DE WAY I FELT WHEN DUCHESS SAYS DOSE WOIDS" 258

SYMPATHY 272

"YELLED 'HOCK DE GEEZER!' ENOUGH TIMES TO SHOW I WAS WIT DE JOLLY" 286

"FOR ABOUT 'STEEN MINUTES I WAS DE BUSIEST TING DAT EVER BUZZED" 300

"YOUR HONOR COULD N'T KEEP BETTER COMPANY," SHE SAYS TO WHISKERS 314

"ALAS!" SAYS MR. PAUL: "ALAS! POOR CHARLES!" 328

HYPATIA DISTURBING HERSELF 342

THEORY OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLES . 356

"DE CENTER OF GRAVITY HAS MOVED FROM GREECE TO BOSTON 370

I

FASHIONABLE SPORTS

"At dat de whole bazoonus danced de couchy-couchy."

CHIMMIE FADDEN AND MR. PAUL

I

FASHIONABLE SPORTS

HELLO, boss! It 's a long time I don't see you.

We is all stopping down to Newport, now; except dat Duchess and me chases up to little old Manhattan now and den to see does de cars still run bote ways on de Bowery. Miss Fannie, wit Little Miss Fannie, comes up to see is de shops selling dollar bills for ninety-eight cents; Whiskers and Mr. Burton slides up to see if common is preferred in Wall Street; and Mr. Paul runs in to make sure his club buys enough ice to put a chill on a small bottle.

Listen; de best ting about living out of New York is dat you have New York to come to. If it was n't for dat I 'd give up

me job wit Whiskers and go to woik for a living—sell evening poipers to Brooklyn gents to put 'em to sleep in de Bridge cars.

Let me tell you: Whiskers has a house to Newport what 's near as big as Mr. Waldorf's hotel, but we calls it a "cottage." I says to Duchess, I says, "Duchess, why does we call dis a cottage," I says, "when it takes twenty hired goils and men to run it?" I says.

"If we did n't call it a cottage," she says, "how would we know we was living in de country? And, besides," says she, "it is bourgeoisie"—dat 's a boid of a woid; get it spelt right—"it is bourgeoisie to live in a 'mansion,' " she says.

Dat was a dead ringer on me, dat "bourgeoisie," so I asks her what it was. She says she could explain it only in French, and I was not next to French close enough to tumble. So I asks Mr. Paul.

Say, honest, dere ain't notting Mr. Paul don't know. Sure. He even knew why de Newport golf toinament only let in players

by invitation. Dat 's right, 'cause I asks him dat, too.

"It 's like dis, Chames," he says: "if our golf toinament here let in any old player what came along de pike, dey would lift our cups in a spritely and disrespectable manner," he says. "If we did n't limit our games to invitation players some rude-fisted young man wit not more dan a million dollars to his name," he says, "would enter de toinament and sock de gutter-percher all over de lot for a score dat would make Coinel Bogey trun a fit in his grave," he says.

"No, Chames," he says, "we must not let any horny-handed child of nature who never wore a bangle on his ankle nor led a cotillion, but who can drive two hundred yards and putt fifteen, enter our push and swipe," he says, "and swipe de chalice from de fair fingers of a home player who pungled de long green to pay for dat chalice.

"No, Chames," he says, "self-protection is de foist law of Willie. Our golf cups

must be presoived for players who go over de links folleyed by deir valets carrying fans, parasols, and smelling-salts. We want no large-handed youts wit brown arms and vulgar, broad backs, hiking to and fro," he says, "over our fair greens, forty-one out and toity-nine in; we want no ten-up-and-eight-to-play lads; no two-to-de-green boys giving us de merry 'ha-ha,' and parting us from our silverware. Nay, nay, Pauline," he says. "Nay, nay, while de invitation list holes out to boin," he says.

Mostly Mr. Paul's woids don't mean notting, so I sometimes change his langwudge to sound as straight as me own.

Well, as I was telling you, I asks Mr. Paul what was dat Dago woid de Duchess passed me out, dat "bourgeoisie." For a little while he was as tautful as de bull pup when it watches a toad in de garden, den he says:

"De bourgeoisie, Chames, is people we do not invite to our houses—because dey don't want to get into our set," he says, "and whose married women do not consider

a chance to marry number two sufficient grounds to divoice number one,'' he says.

''De distinguishing trait,''—dose was his very woids! Is dey corkers? What!—''de distinguishing trait of de bourgeoisie is dat dey never don't get deir names in de poipers. It is proof of how low-minded a bourgeois is dat he frequent lands a swift kick on de poisson of a yellow newspoiper man who wants to see his daughter's trousseau. De bourgeoisie is common-minded folks,'' he says, ''who pays deir taxes, builds churches, minds deir own business, and don't know wedder a otternobile is loaded at de muzzle or de breech.

''Have notting to do wit 'em, Chames,'' he says, ''unless you happen to be president of a bank dat needs a few millions to help it over a tough proposition,'' he says. ''Den make a loud holler for a bunch of 'em, for dey is most helpful in foist aid to de financial injured.''

Mr. Paul uses long woids to give him a toist—dey is hot stuff.

Say, dose ottermobiles he was telling of is hot stuff, too. Whiskers got one. Hark: he bought it in Paris for a billion francs, which is near as much as ten tousand American plunks. It cost him dat to bring it over, and a French mug, called a "shuffer," came along to run it, and he cost as much more. When we got it up to de cottage it looked like a cross between a fire-engine and a steam-roller.

Well, everyting was ready for a start; de shuffer was up on de shuff, Whiskers was on de back seat, and he asks Miss Fannie to take a ride wit him. She says she has a bad headache, so he asks for Little Miss Fannie to go wit him. At dat Miss Fannie grabs de kid, runs in de house wit her, and locks herself in de noissery. Den he asks Mr. Paul, and Mr. Paul says he has to go and kick a yellow dog. Den he asks Mr. Burton, and Mr. Burton says he has to go to de dentist.

Whiskers looked hard at de gents, what was bote smiling, and den he says to me,

"Chames, jump up on de seat wit de shuffer, and we 'll show dese faint hearts what fine sport it is," he says.

Say, I 'll pass it out to you honest, I had n't lost no ottermobiling; but dat shuffer had been trying to get gay wit Duchess, and I could n't take a bluff before him, so I gets onto de front seat, and was strapped down.

Well, de shuffer moves a lever, and someting in de belly of de machine began whizzing like a hurry-call ambulance. But we did n't start.

"Dere 's a head wind," says Mr. Paul.

"De mainsail don't fit," says Mr. Burton.

Shuffer gets down wit a crank, and gives someting a twist in de side of de machine. Den he kicked it in de ribs, and she began spitting blue fire and coal oil. Shuffer gives someting else a whack—and we was off like we 'd been shot out of a chute.

But shuffer was left!

"Stop her!" yells Whiskers.

I kicked a steel bar wit me feet, and we

stopped suddent. Whiskers dived against de front so hard his bonnet was jammed down over his chin.

Just den we began going back as fast as we 'd gone foreward. I kicked anodder lever and turned a wheel. At dat de whole bazoonus danced de couchy-couchy, and besides de flames and oil dere was smoke and smells coming from de inside.

"Port your helm, Chames! Luff her, luff her!" yells Mr. Paul.

"Ready about! Lower your peak and jibe de spinnaker," cries Mr. Burton.

De shuffer tore his hair and jabbered French to beat Duchess.

I got right in it den. I gives a slide, a twist, or a toin to everyting dat would move, and, say, tings was gay, for fair. Foist we waltzed, next we bucked, den we spun round like a top, and all de time Whiskers was making a holler tru his hat to beat a steam fog-horn; shuffer was weeping and swearing, and de gents on de sidewalk was telling me to sit tight and I 'd win de race in a walk.

But she would n't walk. I toined everyting to once. She stood up on her hind wheels and pawed; on her front wheels and kicked; did a kangaroo hop, scooted round like de bull pup after its tail, and at last, when dere was so much steam, smoke, oil, fire, dust, you could n't see, she took a header and landed upside down.

Well, say, I was broke to pieces, but what hoit me most was trying not to laugh at Whiskers. When dey pulled him out of his hat his langwudge was so beautiful I had to holler like I was killed to hide me laugh. By de time de doctor had stitched and plastered us a constable came and arrested Whiskers for driving a ottermobile too fast, and he had to pungle toiteen dollars and toity-five cents, fine and cost. Dat 's right. Late dat night Whiskers took me out to de stable, and give me a big hammer.

"Get busy, Chames," he says. "Get to woik."

Wit dat he gives de mobile a smash—and de next morning it was took away by de

junk man. Whiskers is a coy old sport mostly, but Carrie Nation is a boarding-school goil alongside him when he gets his dandruff up. He 's gone back to steam yachting since den.

But, say, now dat Sir Tummis has took a steady job of trying to lift de cup we is getting too much of dat yachting game, for de salt air gives de gents toists like de inside of a empty salt-barrel, and I has to pull de plugs from de pints. I told Mr. Paul I wished Sir Tummis would stop to home or somebody would give him a cup, and let it go at dat.

"You is not on to de reason of Sir Tummis's visit," says Mr. Paul. "Sir Tummis," he says, "is trying to do by a jolly what de British tried to do by a scrap a hundred and twenty-five years ago, or more," he says.

So I says, "What was doing?" I says. "Dere was no *America's* cup den," I says.

"Yes, dere was," says Mr. Paul—"Amer-

ica's tea-cup," he says. "De British drink tea—we drink coffee—and since dat Boston tea-party dey has never give up de hope of making us buy tea, and de kind dey buy."

"But," I says, "what has Sir Tummis to do wit tea?"

"Hush, Chames!" says Mr. Paul. "Dat is a delicate subject, not to be discussed in public. Sir Tummis don't want de cup. If he taut he had as much chance of winning it as a man wit tallow legs has of standing well wit Satan, he 'd set his fin-keel cross-wise before de race.

"No, Chames, so long as we keep de cup Sir Tummis can keep coming for it, and more and more Americans will learn what a good ting a certain brand of tea is. Say notting of dis, Chames, or you 'll shock many good Americans who love Sir Tummis—in spite of de handle to his name—so hard dey sits up nights to tink about it."

I asked Duchess what Mr. Paul meant

by dat string of talk, and she said he had no respect for titles, and was no better dan a bourgeois.

On de level, when I gets a ting explained by bote Duchess and Mr. Paul, I am worse mixed dan a Coney Island cocktail. See?

II

SOFT SNAPS

"'Why don't you get a job bossing de government,' I says."

II

SOFT SNAPS

YOU 'RE on dat Duchess is Miss Fannie's maid, and I 'm valet for Mr. Burton, Miss Fannie's husband. Well, if any of de odder hired hands tries to jolly Duchess to toin a finger outside her job dey has to guess again. She 's as haughty as de actress what plays de 'venturess when any one tries to flim-flam her into doing stunts off her beat.

She gives me de arched eyebrow because I gets busy at any old kind of a job around de house. "You is footman for Miss Fannie," she says, "steward for Whiskers, and butler for Mr. Paul—what 's only a visitor at our house, at dat—*espèce d'idiot!*" she says. When Duchess slangs me in forn langwudge I just says to her, "Rubber!"

See? She can't talk back den, and if she can't talk she truns fits. She 's French, and not up to de fine points of American talk, so when I hands out "Rubber!" to her, I can count ten, and she 's still out. Easy!

Well, I has been waltzing about in brownstone society for years, now, but dere is one ting I can't get wise on. Dat is, how a loidy can be sister to a mug what ain't her brodder?

I asks Duchess about dis, and she laughs and says: "Upon a soitain occasion sentimental"—when she tries to talk big she always gets de horse before de cart. "Upon a soitain occasion sentimental," she says, "Mamzelle Fannie promise to be a sister to M'sieu Paul, and M'sieu Paul," she says, "being a young man of sentiments agreeable, is trying," she says, "to help Mamzelle Fannie to keep her woid by being a brodder to her."

"But," I says, "he ain't her brodder for fair," I says. "Whiskers has no son."

"You forget, Chames," she says. "Brod-

ders, like marriages, is made in heaven,'' she says.

So I says to meself I 'd pipe off Mr. Paul de next time he comes to our house, and see could I cop de game.

Well, de next time he chases in dey was all holding down easy-chairs in de library, where dey mostly hangs out—Whiskers, Miss Fannie, Mr. Burton, and Mr. Paul—when no odder company has came. I was dere, putting two lumps of sugar, six cloves, someting else, and some hot water on top of dat, into de gents' glasses, and rubbering quietly like a cat in a butcher shop.

''Good evening,'' says Mr. Paul. ''Can a weary pilgrim rest a while in dis humble tent?'' he says.

''Soitenly,'' says Mr. Burton, ''if de pilgrim has his scrip wit him, as well as his staff, and will take a hand at bridge,'' he says, wit a wink at Whiskers.

''Oh,'' says Mr. Paul, ''I has me stuff, as well as me staff, and shall sit in at bridge, if you say so. But,'' he says, ''it would be

quicker relief—and less trouble—to trun me scrip on de log fire,'' he says.

Mr. Burton looked as tickled as if he 'd told himself a funny story; and Mr. Paul looked pleasant too, dough what he said was no joke. If I had de sweet long green what Mr. Burton win from Mr. Paul at whist I 'd race yachts, or run for Mayor. I 'd be ashamed not to.

I suppose Mr. Paul, being Mr. Burton's made-in-heaven brodder-in-law, don't hold his cards as close to his chin playing wit him as he does mostly. Loidies and gents plays nearly de same games in de Diamond-back district as dey does on de Bowery—but de rules is different.

''Really, Paul,'' says Miss Fannie, piping him off in a sisterly way, ''you do look wearied. What has you been doing?'' she says.

''Paul!'' says Whiskers, giving de angry eye. ''Has you been playing Wall Street again?''

''Woise dan dat,'' says Mr. Paul. ''I

has been excising me mental factory—'' What 's dat? ''Faculties''? Dat 's right; dat 's what he says—''me mental faculties,'' he says, ''to find some game—in or out of Wall Street—dat I has not played out. Dis is a hard life, and a hard woild to live it in,'' he says.

''It is, indeed,'' says Whiskers. ''Chames,'' he says, ''tell Perkins''—dat 's de butler—''we shall want a little supper at eleven. Dere 's a cold partridge, is dere not, Fannie? and some broiled ham; and, Chames, a bottle or two of de Special Vintage.''

''It is a hard life, indeed,'' says Mr. Paul, as I set de card-table for 'em.

I guess dat is n't no joke, for Mr. Paul, de odder day, was kicking about how hard he had to woik to find someting to do dat he had n't done already, and I says to him, I says, ''Excuse me,'' says I, ''but wit a political drag as strong as you have,'' I says, ''why don't you get a job bossing de government?'' I says.

"I has already taut of dat, Chames," he says. "But," says he, "me ambition to soive me country and me flag," he says, "would be satisfied only if I could boss two governments, in de Diplomatic Department."

When Mr. Paul has his long-woid stop pulled out I has only to fetch a pint to keep him tuned up to G. So I fetches.

He looks at de fizz like he was sprised to see it, and, putting a timbleful into his face, he says: "If ever I should find meself strong enough to woik, Chames," says he, "I 'd ask me friend de President of Washington to make me foreman of de Diplomacy Department, U. S. G.," he says. "Me serial and studious nature would find congenial employment as Sectary of State. He is de international jollier: tree falls out of five lifts de Cup; in case of war de referee signals 'no race.'

"I once went down to Washington," he says, "for to get a line on de job, and having me union card in me jacket de Sectary lets me sit down in his office to rubber de game.

De foist mug to come to de bat''—sometimes I has to put Mr. Paul's foolish langwudge into straight talk—''was Charlie Wu Lung, minister plenty-potation from China. He skated in on clog shoes, bumps his conk on de carpet enough to give him a headache, if he was n't used to it, and he says, 'Good morning, Your Excellency,' says Charlie. 'How 's your long game coming on?' he says.

'' 'Poorly,' says de Sectary, 'poorly. I 'm slicing wit me brassey,' he says, 'like it was a bread knife,' he says. 'How 's your own game, Your Excellency?' he says.

''Den Charlie Wu says, 'Not up to par,' he says. 'Me queue got tangled in me niblick yesterday,' he says, 'when I made a swipe at de ball what would sent it across de Patomac,' he says, 'and nearly yanked me scalp lock off me conk,' he says.

'' 'Indeed!' says de Sectary, giving him de frappé front. 'What Your Excellency wants to do is to keep Your Excellency's eye on de ball.'

"Wit dat Charlie Wu looks like he 'd found a toad in his tea, and he chases off to cable to Li Hung-Chang: 'Prospects for repeal of Chinese exclusion act not so favorable. Received hint from Sectary of State to closely obsoive action of Pacific Coast delegation. Remit million gold to assist obsoivation.'

"I asks de Sectary," says Mr. Paul, "how he dared to be so outspoken wit government secrets. 'I has to give de members of de diplomatic corpse a straight tip, now and den,' says de Sectary, 'or deir home governments cuts off deir wages for not getting busy. And,' says de Sectary, 'de saddest ting in official life is to have to sit into a small game wit a forn diplomat who is shy on his wages.'

"Well," goes on Mr. Paul, "de next gent to waltz in was de Shargy dey Fairs of Great Brittain and England. Him and de Sectary side-stepped, and sparred for openings, and den Shargy says: 'I tink Sir Tummis would won,' he says, 'if *Shamrock*

had took de hard tack instead of de port tack.'

"'Nay,' says de Sectary, who came up smiling. 'If he had blanketed his overhang wit de baby jib, Barr would luffed his lee-way, and set 'em up in de odder ally.' 'Tanks!' says Shargy. 'Awfully obliged,' he says; and he skated.

"De next day de poipers had a cablegraft from Vienna what said: 'A well-informed correspondent writes in de usually correct "Tagblat" dat Lord Salisbury has received unofficial advices dat de Hay-Pauncefote treaty will be favorably reported, unless de Committee on Forn Relations reports it adversely.' "

Sometimes I has a notion dat Mr. Paul is n't on de dead serious. But he has a face on him dat don't tell no more dan de face of a stopped clock; so you has to guess again, or let it go at dat.

I told Duchess about our talk of soft jobs, and she says dat if she was n't Miss Fannie's maid she 'd hike out on top of de stoige

as a actress. She has saved all de dresses Miss Fannie has give her for five years, so she could be a star good and easy, all right. Wit ten trunks of swell rags to dress her, and a play wrote around de trunks by Clite Fitch, she 'd make Sarry Bernhardt look like a back-row ballet goil de foist season. Sure.

But listen: I don't want none of dat stoige job in mine. I had a fren what was one of de fanciest song-and-dance men on de Bowery, and a good dresser on and off de stoige, at dat, who got a job in a Broadway teeater.

"What salary do you want?" asks de manager, when me fren asks for de job. "Fifteen dollars a week, cash, and a hundred a week for publication," says me fren, who was no farmer.

"I 'll do better dan dat," says de manager, who was no farmer, neider; "I 'll press-agent you at two hundred and fifty a week—and give you seven dollars and a half in long green."

Well, me fren took de job, but it was his

finish. When de Bowery push read in de poipers of his dragging out two-fifty per week dey touched him so frequent his long green was n't enough to start wit, and he pawned his close to make good.

At last he went to de manager and told him to call off his press agent on dat two-hundred-and-fifty salary yarn. "Why?" says de manager. "Because me wardrobe is already gone to make good on dat yarn," says me fren.

"No wardrobe? Off to de woods!" says de manager.

Me fren 's resting, now.

III

OF L'AIGLON AND WOMAN

"De Duchess was crying wit rage."

III

OF L'AIGLON AND WOMAN

SAY, I like to chin wid Mr. Paul because he makes up woids as he goes along, and dat 's fun for me; and I puts him wise on real woids, and dat 's good for him.

"It 's improving to me," he says, "it 's improving to me, and it 's amusing to you," he says. "Wit improvement and amusement," he says, "even Newport would be endurable."

But dat was only a jolly, for when we goes to our place at Newport Mr. Paul chases along, too, so of course it 's endurable to him. See? He comes to our country place de odder day, and, as de folks was all out on de road getting deirselves perfumed wit ottar-of-mobile oil, he says he 'd stop awhile and improve his mind wit a

short conversatserony wit me, if I had time to spare.

I had time to boin and was looking for a furnace, so I asks him had he been to see Sally Bernhardt out on top of de stoige in "Leglong."

"No," says he. "No, I has not went," he says, "for I loaned me Ollendorff to a fren who was going to Paris," he says, "to buy some Old Masters off a new shop what is toining 'em out at cut rates," he says. "I stopped at home," he says, "and wrote an essay on 'Books dat have Helped me Frens,'" he says. "De drama," he says —"de drama, as interrupted by Miss Bernhardt," he says, "is a great moral teacher. A French play done by Miss Bernhardt," he says, "offers a grand chance to draw moral lessons," he says. "Tell me, Chames," he says, "what did you draw?"

"I drew ten dollars," I says, "ten good, long green plunks I had hid from Duchess, for de price of two seats," I says. "Duchess told me she 'd die if she did n't go, so

I give her de ten plunks to buy de tickets, and den found out dat Miss Fannie had give Duchess her seats. Say," I says, "is dat goil—is Duchess—a fineseer? What? All she needs is a stock-ticker and a steam-yacht to make her a Steel Trust magnet."

"A Steel Trust magnet," says Mr. Paul, "must have a soul of iron," he says. "Duchess is too peaceful for de job."

"Sure," I says. "Duchess is for peace if I has de price," I says. "When I asks her for de ten plunks she flimflammed me out of, she says, 'Let us not quarrel, Chames,' she says, 'about a little ting like dat. You is reckless wit your wealt,' she says, 'so I 'll keep de money for fear you might buy a house and lot on Fift Avenoo wit it,' she says.

"But 'Leglong' was wort de loss of ten," I says. "It was a better play dan 'De Moonshiner's Bride' we seen in de Bowery de week before. Most pieces on de stoige gives all de fighting to de men," I says, "but

woman is more courageouser dan man," I says, "and 'Leglong' proved it."

"How is dat, Chames?" says Mr. Paul.

"Woman," I says, "don't care about de distance between bases. If dey needs a home run in deir business, dey lights out for it, witout fussing about a home-run hit to run on," I says. "Mr. Leglong," I says, "wanted de ball knocked over de fence before he 'd get away from his base. But dere was a goil in de play—she was de countess—what was out for a home run witout caring wedder de ball was over de fence or in de pitcher's hand," I says.

"She was 'pestuous," says Mr. Paul.

"She was a loidy," I says. "But, say," I says, "de mug what wrote 'Leglong' was no happy, happy farmer lad. He knowed dat women would pungle up five good plunks of deir husbands' boodle to see a play what proved dey had more sand dan man has," I says, "when dey would n't yield half a plunk to see 'De Moonshiner's Bride,' where a man saves a woman from

awful deat in every act—wit six acts, at dat."

"I has obsoived," says Mr. Paul, "some evidence of de trut of your similitude. But de fact dat de countess in 'Leglong' had more courage dan de duke proves dat women knows more bases is stole dan is earned. Woman," he says, "as you remark, Chames," he says, "is more courageouser dan man. To be sure," he says, "she is afraid of a mouse; but we should blame de mouse for dat, not woman. De loidy you speak of in 'Leglong' was an exception to de rule," he says, using dose dude woids he has a strangle-hold on—"an exception to de rule dat women do not act upon deir belief dat two and two make any old ting in de multiplication-table."

"Little Miss Fannie knows her multiplication-table," I says, "and she is a boid."

"Truly," says Mr. Paul. "Woman is a boid because she pretends to believe in de multiplication-table. We sends our daughters to college,"—he was jollying, for Mr.

Paul is a bachelor,—"and dey learns to define de indefinable," says he, making up woids as he went along, "and," he says, "dey learns to harmonize poetry and sense; beyond which," he says, "effort of de human mind would be flying in de face of nature. Yet," he says, "woman only makes a bluff of believing dat twice two is four, and dereby," he says, "under Providence, is presoived for us to love, honor, and obey. What," he says, "would dis woild be odderwise?"

"Search me," I says. "Search me. I ain't got de answer."

"If de feminine mind acted upon its inner-radcable"—dat 's de very woid he used, inner-radcable!—"belief dat twice two makes what it wants it to, even de simple summer goil would make Jones of Arc look like a loidy golf-player, ten down and eight to play," he says.

Just den Miss Fannie came in, so I did n't get a chance to ask Mr. Paul who Miss Jones of Arkansas was; but if she was like de

countess in "Leglong," she never raked no hay for a living. Did you see Sally Bernhardt in dat play? No? Den let me tell you about it.

Before we went to de play Duchess gives me a song and dance about it. She is from de same forn part Miss Bernhardt comes from. Dey bote talks French, and I 'm getting a little bit gay wit dat langwudge meself.

When Duchess told me about "Leglong" she told me about someting else. Dat 's de way wit all women, and specially Duchess. When she wants to win a hat off Miss Fannie she don't talk about de hat, but about how fine Little Miss Fannie is coming along wit her French. Dat mostly fetches de hat and a pair of gloves to boot.

Instead of giving me a straight tip on "Leglong" she talked about a mug named Napoleon. Say, he was a top-liner for fair. He was n't a has-been, nor a will-be, but he was an izzer. He was it. From de tip I got on him he was de lad who foist found

out dat you can't saw wood and lead de cotillion at de same time. De cotillion is all right for dose what has n't started a fire what needs cord-wood to keep it going.

Napoleon and Grant never was no good at leading a cotillion, but dey has de biggest tombs in de woild, and deir names was in de poipers more dan a opray-singer wit a sore troat—and dey never had no press-agent, at dat.

Say, if Napoleon was boss of New York, Dick Croker would be looking for a dollar-a-day job in de tunnel railroad. Dat 's right.

Well, dis play would never been writ if it had n't been for Napoleon; so if you don't know about him you might as well stop at home from de teeater and save de price. He is de main guy, and dat 's why I 'm putting you wise on him.

He was a boss. See? But he did n't get his job from his ma, like de Prince of Wales; and he did n't get elected, like Billy O'Brien. He just sized up de job, liked de looks of it, and says, "I choose dat." See?

Dere was a lot of ready-made kings holding down easy jobs around dere, and some of 'em says to him, "Nay, nay, Pauline! Guess again," dey says. Duchess tells me dat suited Nap down to de ground. Dey was looking for trouble, and Nap had trouble to give away; and, besides, he was a scrapper from de scrap-basket.

All dose ready-made kings gets deir gangs togedder and puts up a fight. Nap had de loveliest time of his life. Every time he had a scrap he win a new district, and he put his own leaders over more districts dan dere is between de Battery and de Bronx.

He made his brodder Joe leader of de Dago Spanish district, where dey builds targets for Dewey and Sampson; his brodder Lou he put in charge of Holland, which is Teddy Roosevelt's old district; his brodder Romy he sets up over Westphalia, where de hams come from; his brodder-in-law, a fly cop named Murray, who 'd been captain of de Paris Tenderloin, he made leader of Na-

ples, a guinney district where de street-sweepers come from. He had one of de grandest shake-ups dere ever was.

Den all de kings what had and had n't lost deir jobs dey calls a caucus, and says, "We must get togedder and turn down dis upstart, or he 'll stampede de convention, and we won't have a place even on de Committee on Music and Fireworks. Let us," dey says, "stand hand to hand, and toe to toe, and heel to heel," dey says, "for shorter hours and longer jobs," dey says. "Let us," dey says, "hist de banner of Reform, and spurn de mailed hand of irony from our midst," dey says.

Well, de Reformers quit fighting among deirselves, and Napoleon's gang was n't strong enough to win witout no toid party in de field to split de Reform vote; so de combine come down to de Harlem wit a majority. Den Nap went over to a place called Elba to race his horses and to wait for de Reformers to begin making faces at each odder. But he came back a steamer or

two too soon, and, in a lovely fight called Waterloo, he met his finish. He was a good one, and I 'm sorry I never met him.

I asked Duchess who it was knocked him out—who got de decision. She says nobody knocked Napoleon out; dat he put himself in de hands of his frens, and dey put him on an island what had no phone to France, so he could n't get his gang togedder again.

"Napoleon was not defeated," says Duchess. "He was betrayed."

She was so cross about it I asked Mr. Paul who win Waterloo, and he says, "Chames," he says, "a long and agreeable study of history, romance, and de drama has led me to believe," he says, "dat de battle of Waterloo was won by a loidy named Becky Sharp," he says.

I don't know if she was Russian, Prussian, or Irish, but she must have been one of dose Jones of Arkansas goils to put as good a man as Nap out of business.

Well, Napoleon had a son, and his name

was Leglong, and he 's de little duke de play is about.

De play shows dat de Reformers was dead leery—afraid, see?—of Leglong, so dey tells his ma to take him over to Austria, and see dat he never learned to play politics, never had a gang, and never tried to run a primary.

De duke's ma—she was de Widdy Napoleon, of course—got gay in Austria and married again, and de little duke, Leglong, was sore dat she forgot her place as Nap's widdy. He told her so, too; and right dere, while Duchess was whispering to me what dey was saying on de stoige, I caught on dat de gent what wrote "Leglong" knew a good ting when he seen it, for he 'd stole de mix-up of de actors from anodder play I seen once, and its name is "Hamlet."

Ever see "Hamlet"? Let me tell you: Edwin Boot' used to say to his modder, de queen, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, getting gay like dis, and marrying again so soon," he said. "You forget too

quick,'' he said. ''I 'm going to get into de ring and do some fighting,'' he said. ''Denmark is rotten,'' he said. Den de queen said she 'd tell her husband, and Boot' said, ''No, don't tell him. I 'll be good,'' he said. But he had to talk, so he said de old king, what was Boot's pa, was a better man, in or out of a fight, dan de one his ma married.

Listen: Leglong sings just de same kind of a song to his ma. He says he 'll get busy and fight till all de quitter blood is out of him. Here 's what Duchess tells me he says to his ma:

''*Si j'ai du sang des rois, il faut qu'on me le tire.*''

All de same he don't: he just talks.

His ma sees he 's no wood-sawyer like his pa, so she truns a scare into him. Instead of fighting de quitter blood out of him, he quits and says for her not to peach to Metternich. But he has to talk, too, so he says to his ma, ''Forget it.'' See? Just like we say in America, ''Ah, forget it!''

He rubs it into her about getting married on de sly in a hurry, and says she forgets so easy. "*Vous oubliez si vite,*" he says, and dat means, "You has a slick mind not to remember."

Say, on de level, is dat "Hamlet"? What?

I told Duchess dat, and she says, "*Naturellement.*" De two plays is much de same, she says. De English, she says, was always stealing French brains, and most likely de mug what wrote "Hamlet" stole it from "Leglong."

Well, de little duke's ma got shy of her job of keeping Leglong from learning his daddy's game, so de Reformers put a geezer named Metternich over him. He was a sort of Headquarters' detective, and rubbered around trying to keep de little duke from learning Napoleon's record, so he would n't get gay and go out and make a reputation for himself.

Say, dere was no use paying wages to Metternich. Leglong was taught everyting

dat would do him any good, and sometings dat would n't; but dere was no fight in him —only talk.

Why, say, de Nap push from Paris fixed it up a dozen times to turn de trick and make de little duke king, but he was always short on nerve and long on talk. No one had de right to tell him to cut his lines, so he talked himself to deat before he could make up his mind to chase himself to Paris, where his gang was ready to smash de Anti-Vice Committee if he would say de woid.

Dey talked so much, and dere was so little doing, I was getting dat tired feeling, and would went home, but at last de countess got into action, and den dere was trouble for fair.

But foist let me tell you: dere was a actor,—he 's Irish all right, his name is Cooghlan, but he speaks French as well as Duchess,—and he played de part of a sergeant doing business to get de duke his dad's job. But he was a chappy alongside de countess when she started playing ball.

When a gang from a tough ward in Paris comes over to where de duke was, dey says to him, "Get a move on, your Dukeship," dey says. "Play ball," dey says. "De push-cart men in belle Paree is not doing a ting but selling your mug on pipes and wipes. It 's up to you," dey says, "to line out a tree-bagger and win de game. Keep your eye on de ball," dey says.

Wit dat every one began talking again, and Sally Bernhardt, who was de duke, talked more dan any one else. But wit dis, and wit dat, and mostly wit de help of de countess, dey hustled de game along till one night de gang agreed to make a rush to Paris, run de town wide open, give de Reformers de merry ha-ha, and make a Tenderloin of de Boulevard dees Eyetalian, as soon as de duke should show up wit a claim of a majority.

What happened? Who got busy foist? Was it Leglong? Not a bit like it! It was de countess. Notting was doing wit de duke but de same old line of talk. It was

only by letting Miss Bernhardt and Con Cooghlan talk all de time dat dey manages to fetch 'em as far as de Wagram base-ball field, where de duke's dad once had one of de finest games of his life.

Still notting doing. Instead of taking his bat and swinging on de solo plexer of de Reformers, de duke all to once tinks of a engagement he has wit a loidy. De countess says she 'd keep de engagement dressed up in close like de duke's; and she done it, and got into a cutting scrape wit de loidy's brodder.

Den de countess takes de L road out to Wagram, and when she finds Leglong still talking, she trows up bote hands, and says, "For heaven's sake, me dear duke," she says, "get busy," she says. "Get a move on!"

"I cannot leave you—a woman!" he says.

"Small loss to leave a goil!" she says.

"But you has fought for me," says he.

"I has," she says, "and made a reputation for you," she says. "I 'm a fencer

from Sword Hollow," she says. "But let dat go: get a move on. *Partez!*" she says.

"You are wounded!" he says.

"And you are talking," says she. "Her brodder led for me, and I give him *le coup de contre-pointe*," she says.

Dat 's French for "knock-out."

De duke asks de countess was de loidy on hand at de engagement. She says no, but dat de cops was.

See de point? It was a woman who done de fighting, got wounded, and was telling de man to get busy; but it was a man who done notting but talk. Why, she kept at him till de cops came and chased her off de lot. Dat left de duke alone. Instead of making a run for Paris, he says, "Now dat I has de field of Wagram all to meself, I will make a few remarks."

Den I had cold feet again.

Say, on de level, he talked so much de old soldiers got up out of deir graves and asks him would he please move on to de next lot, or hire a hall, and leave 'em in

peace. Dat was where dey was not wise. If dere was one ting more dan anodder de duke was looking for, it was a chance to talk to somebody; so he talked back at de G. A. R. till de coinel of de post toined out some live soldiers to make de duke quit.

It was all over but de picture and de coitain. Leglong took cold on de base-ball lot and dies in de next act. De only man who 'd done any fighting for him was a woman; all de sneak woik against him was done by a man, de gazeaboo Metternich.

When we left de teeater Duchess was crying wit rage. She says to me, "If Napoleon's son had only been a goil," she says, "she 'd been in Paris taking five o'clock at de Louvre, while dat silly duke was raising ghosts to talk to," she says.

It don't count against woman as a fighter dat she 's afraid of a mouse, for dere ain't no district wort winning dat is run by mice, anyway. What?

IV

THE WIDOW'S AUTOMOBILE

"We makes him a present of our dust."

IV

THE WIDOW'S AUTOMOBILE

REMEMBER de Wily Widdy, de swell dame in Miss Fannie's set, what used to make goo-goo eyes at Whiskers? Well, she 's a widdy yet. She must like de game, dough Duchess says she ought to marry—and give de goils a chance.

We was down to our place on de Sound last week, and Mr. Paul, who has de place next ours, happens to be down, too. Somehow he mostly happens to be along where we is.

Wily Widdy, she lives pretty near our place, too, and de very day after we opens de house she comes chasing over in her ottermobile, looking like a picture in de poiper wit her mobe coat and hat and veil. Miss Fannie was on de verandy, and looks

as pleased to see de Widdy as if Little Miss Fannie had de measles; but real-ting swells like Miss Fannie takes deir punishment smiling, and dat 's de way she took de Widdy.

"You 're looking uncommon fit," says Miss Fannie.

"I should, me dear," says de Widdy. "It 's hard woik. Really, Fannie," she says, "you might say I do me own house-woik. Why, do you know, dear," she says, "I has only six soivants on me place, not counting me maid, me sewing-woman, de gardeners, and stablemen. How is your dear papa?" she says.

"You is a wonder of a huzif," says Miss Fannie.

"A lonely one, me dear," says de Widdy. "It 's an ax of Christmas charity," she says, "for you to come here once a year to keep me from going mad with ennui. How 's your dear papa?" she says.

"You see very few people?" says Miss Fannie, smiling.

"Not a soul, me dear!" says de Widdy. "And I goes nowhere," she says. "Except a trip to Paris, to buy a few simple tings to cover me nakedness; a mont or two at Newport; and a run to Canada, to meet de Duke and Duchess of York, one might say I has not set foot outside me own cabin door. How 's your dear papa?" she says. "Does your man understand a mobile?" she says, meaning me. "How 's your dear—"

"I tink," says Miss Fannie, "Chames could care for such a dear little runabout as yours."

"Den let him take it to de stables," says de Widdy. "How 's your dear papa?" she says, going into de house wit Miss Fannie.

It was a dinky little mobe, wit only two handles to its name—one to start and stop, one to steer—and I got intimate wit it dead easy. Remember me telling you about de big machine Whiskers brought from Paris? Since I was left at de post wit dat one I

has been rubbering de mobe game, so as not to be out of de push de next time I was elected shuffer. I did tings wid de Widdy's mobe; copped de racket dead easy, and was having de time of me life, when Duchess comes and pipes me, tautful, awhile.

"*Vous êtes très* smart, M'sieu," she says.

"Sure," I says.

"De Widdy stays to lunch," she says.

"Call de police," I says.

"We might excise her mobile," she says.

I tumbled. Duchess near died wit French rage when Whiskers made scrap-iron of de Paris machine.

"How can we make a sneak?" I asks.

"I has de cap and mask and glasses of de shuffer of M'sieu Van Courtlandt," she says. "Nobody would n't know you in 'em."

"How about yourself?" I says. Everybody about our places knows Duchess be sight, she being a boid for style when she sheds her cap and apron.

"Have I no wit, Master Chames?" she

says. "Take de machine to de side lane and wait for me."

Say, honest, Duchess is a torrowbred, for fair, but I never taut she had de noive to toin de trick she done. In two minutes I taut Widdy was coming—but it was Duchess ragged out in Widdy's coat, hat, and veil. Dat 's right.

"What 's your game, Duchess?" says I.

"Why is it, *mon ami,*" she says, "you always tinks I am for de game out? I am *ingénue* as a child in de boarding-school," she says. "If we see M'sieu Van Courtlandt overtake him," she says.

Dat last speech made a soubrette out of de *ingénue;* but I was feeling a bit sporty meself, so I hikes out de old Boston post road, where I knows Whiskers takes his morning ride.

Before we comes up on him Duchess tips me to let her go. And I let, and we slides past Whiskers like he was hitched to a house and lot. As we makes him a present of our dust, Duchess passes him out a swell bow

what was a dead ringer for de style of bow dat Widdy gives, and peeping tru de side of me glasses I see him bob his bonnet like he was tickled to deat.

"What next?" I asks Duchess, when we 'd left him half a mile back.

"Slow one little," she says, "so Whiskair can keep us in sight, and make for de Cottage."

Dat is a road-house where swells stop to wash de dust out of deir troats. So I stops dere, Duchess jumps out, runs to a dinky bit of summer house, and tips me to folley her. A French waiter comes, Duchess jabbers to him in hurry-call style, and in half a minute we had a couple of glasses of sweet water and pink syrup on de table for us.

"It 's too soft," I says. "I 'll not drink de dinky dago stuff," I says. "Fetch me a beer," I says, taking off me mask.

"You need not have to drink it," says Duchess, "only pretend to, and keep on your mask," she says, pulling Widdy's veil over her face.

Say, she was awful busy, so I done what she told me. I did n't say a woid, but Duchess laughed like I was jollying to beat a drum. I heard Whiskers come along, stop, leave his horse, and start for de summer house.

Den Duchess got gay. She put her arm over me shoulder, and wit her lips close to me ear, she says, "If you move or speak, Chames, I 'll not buy tickets to de teeater, like I promised," she says.

Dat 's all she says, only she says it like she was saying tings ten-to-one nicer. Whiskers stops suddint when he seen us, said someting to himself what was a million miles from polite langwudge; den I heard him chase back to his horse, and gallop off.

"Quick, Chames," says Duchess. "Get de machine started and hurry back by de shore road."

Say, you should see us! It 's too bad de judges was n't dere to time us. We made a mile a minute when we stuck to de road,

but when we was in de air we doubled dat gait. Easy!

"Is it safe?" says Duchess, near dead wit fear.

"Sure not," I says. "De only ting dat makes mobiling sport is dat it is n't safe."

"*Mon Dieu!*" she says, as we hit a rock and jumped a mile, "if Miss Fannie don't give me her lace tea-gown for dis I 'm a foolish fool!"

"What for?" I says, catching me breat as we struck de eart again.

"Ask no questions," she says, "but attend," she says, "to dis *voiture du diable!*" she says.

Say, we was n't long getting home. Duchess floats into de house looking like Widdy's double, but when I 'd stabled de machine, and got to de house, Duchess was waltzing about as per usual, like she 'd never left her own fireside.

In about half an hour Whiskers gets home, and he had a mug on him like he wears when he gets a notice from his broker

for a bunch of long green to buy some margins wit. Hark: I ain't on to just what dose margins is, but de way Whiskers don't like 'em I wonder he ever buys 'em. When he piped de Widdy's coat and hat he could n't been more sprised to see 'em if dey was a basket of snakes.

Just den Miss Fannie sails along, and she says, "I 'm glad you 're home for lunch, papa," she says. "Mrs. Harding is here."

"Indeed!" says Whiskers, like he 'd just been took from cold storage. "How did she come?"

"In her ottermobile," says Miss Fannie.

Whiskers blinked like some one had passed him out a hard jolt, and he says, "I suddently recalls a engagement to lunch at de yacht club wit de Commodore of de Rocking-Chair Fleet," he says, and shoots out.

Dat evening Mr. Paul was to our place, and he says, "I tink I 'll buy a mobe," he says, "now dat yachting is over wit."

"Dey is no good," says Whiskers.

"Not de big kind you had," says Mr. Paul, "but a tidy little runabout."

"Dey is woise!" says Whiskers.

"To be sure," says Mr. Paul, "dey is not much for sport. Holding a crowbar what regulates a tank of coal-oil is not de keen delight," he says, using dose fancy woids he has a cinch on, "of holding de helm of a yacht, and feeling de power in her sails; it 's not like holding de ribbons over a pair of smart steppers what obey your touch and voice as your own muscles obey your will; it 's not like sitting a tree-quarter-bred jumper dat 's willing to accept Washington Arch for a hurdle—if you is; it 's not like trying a cleek approach of a hundred yards to be down on your next for a half—to win de game; it 's not like crouching in a blind before sunrise, listening for de whir of teal you can hardly see, and dat must be killed at forty yards wit de foist barrel—or else fall where your dog can't retrieve 'em; it 's not—"

"All nonsense," cuts in Whiskers. "De

ottermobile is a wicked, a common, a vulgar nuisance!''

''Why, papa dear!'' says Miss Fannie. ''How cross you are! You would fared better if you'd stopped and lunched wit Mrs. Harding and me.''

''You need not return her call,'' says Whiskers, getting poiple in de face. ''She is a wicked, a common, a vulgar—''

''Papa!'' says Miss Fannie, getting big-eyed.

Say, when she gets big-eyed tings stop suddent.

All de same, Miss Fannie could n't have been very cross about tings, for de next day she gives Duchess de lace tea-gown. I asks Duchess ''What for?'' and she says, ''I gets de gown for being such a good goil.'' What!

V

MR. PAUL INSTRUCTS AND LEARNS

"'And make de sweetest cotillion leader Chief of Police,' he says."

V

MR. PAUL INSTRUCTS AND LEARNS

SAY, wit me hand on me heart, you never can't tell when a woman has someting up her sleeve besides her elbow.

Listen: Duchess, being forn born, has more tricks dan we Americans. I suppose dat 's because America was discovered—for dere is notting like being discovered to make a mug quit getting gay. I wish some one would discover France; den, I guess, Duchess would stop some of de tricks she woiks to touch me for all de boodle I earns or wins. It 's a good ting I married Duchess, for, if she was n't me wife, de good long green she has parted me from would make me sad. Now it only makes me mad. It 's all in de family, and some day she 'll get a tired feeling, and I can hold out enough

plunks to give meself a day off, witout wondering where I 'll cop de price to celebrate wit.

But I was going to tell you: you know de bull pup what Mr. Paul bought for Little Miss Fannie? Well, dere 's notting about dat dog dat grows so fast as de size of his neck. His collars always fits him so quick dey makes his eyes bulge like a Willie who has bet his last bean on a sure ting horse dat "also ran."

Well, me and Duchess was going into town de odder day to do some errants for Miss Fannie, and Mr. Paul says to me, he says, "Chames," he says, "stop at de store and buy a new collar for de dog," he says, "for his collar chokes him so he tinks he is mistook for a nannychist. And," he says, "dat is too mean a choke to play, even on a dog," he says.

So he passes me out a fiver, and I asks him, "What is a nannychist?" I asks.

"I rejoice dat you has come to me wit dat question," says Mr. Paul, looking as

solemn as de photograph of a matinée actor.. "Had you asked Mr. Van Courtlandt"—dat 's Whiskers—"he would have trun a fit for a answer. But I, Chames," he says, "has made a study of nannychism; and, having a broken and a contrite heart," he says, "can speak on de subject witout danger of applexy."

When Mr. Paul talks dude, like dat, he likes to have someting near de hollow of his elbow. So I pulls de plug out of a pint, and I puts a glass where he could hear de gossip of de bubbles witout a megaphone.

He looks at de glass tautful-like for a while, den he says: "Nannychists is two kinds: Dose dat teaches it and dose dat performs it. I deeply regret," he says, "dat our laws lets us hang only de performing nannychists. When I gets to be King of dis country, Chames," he says, "I will make a hit wit honest folk by hanging de teachers of nannychism. Dereby," he says, "I will save de next king de trouble of hanging de performers—dere won't be any to hang."

De funniest ting about Mr. Paul is dat he looks most solemner when he murmurs tru his bonnet. De furder dey is from being next, de wiser bote him and Whiskers looks.

Listen: de next day Mr. Paul and Whiskers was having a hot-air conversatserony on police blackmail, which dey is as wise about as a gazeaboo from Cohoes is about green-goods. Whiskers was so red in de face dat his whiskers looked like a streak of fat in a fresh-cut ham, and he was saying, "I tell you, Paul," he says, "dere should be a law," says he, "what would hang every person what took money for protecting vice," he says.

"What is de matter wit boining 'em at de stake?" says Mr. Paul, giving me de wink, but looking at Whiskers as solemn as a song-and-dance artist. "A fire," he says, "is more cheerfuller dan a scaffold any day," he says. "Especial," he says, "on a cold day."

"I agrees wit you," says Whiskers. "You sometimes talk like a serious-minded

young man, Paul," he says. "You ought to break into Congress, to make laws against lowering de rate of interest. De ship of state," he says, "needs you at de helm. Chames," he says, "soive us a small bottle."

"Why 'small'?" says Mr. Paul. "Ain't you drinking anyting?"

"A large bottle, Chames," says Whiskers.

So I soives 'em bote a life-size ball, listening to deir talk while I fusses around like I was busy.

"De trouble is," says Whiskers, "we is not doing our duty as citizens and tax-players," he says. "We should get togedder and teach de police how wicked it is for to take money to protect vice," he says.

"It is woise dan wicked," says Mr. Paul. "It is bad form. We should have classes in Etiquette for Cops," he says, "and make de sweetest cotillion leader chief of police," he says.

"Paul, you are jesting," says Whiskers.

"Tell me, in earnest, what remedy you would apply," he says.

"If I was Boss of New York," says Mr. Paul, "I would hire Madison Square Garden, and ask all de crooks in de city to take tea wit me. Under de sooding influence of marmalade I would find out from 'em, on de level, what dey could afford to pay to do business, wide open. We would make a gentleman's agreement on rates, and all dey paid I 'd hand over to de City Treasurer. De result," says Mr. Paul, taking a peep at his glass, "would be dat rich mugs all over de woild would hustle to New York, where only crooks paid taxes. Den life," he says, "would be one grand sweet song. Chames," he says, "is anyting holding de bottle down in de cooler?"

"Excuse me," I says, as I put some ballast in his schooner, "excuse me, but could I trun in a remark?"

"It is likely," says Mr. Paul, "dat Chames could trun light on de subject dat would be of profit and use"—which was

what de gent said when he lifted de loidy's gold watch.

"Proceed, Chames," says Whiskers. "Your early association must have give you some knowledge which may benefit us," he says, using langwudge what would jolt a lawyer.

"I only wishes to remark," I says, "dat Mr. Paul's plan is no good."

"Indeed!" says Mr. Paul, looking as sprised as Little Miss Fannie when she mistook a bumblebee for a daisy. "I was tinking of having my plan copyrighted, and making a drama out of it," he says. "What 's wrong wit it?"

"If de police," I says, "is not in on your gents' agreement dey would cut rates, and swipe all de business. Excuse me if I remarks dat de stuff is dere, and dey is bound to get it."

Bote gents looked at me like I 'd asked a riddle, and dey was waiting for de answer. Den Whiskers says, "What do you mean by de 'stuff,' Chames?"

Say, would n't dat scare you? Whiskers gets a glass arm twice a year cutting off coupons, but he was n't wise enough to get next to me meaning!

I says to him, like I was n't sprised at his ignorance, "De 'stuff' is de boodle dat de gang what runs de city shakes down from de crooks; and 'dey' is de shaker-downs."

"Ah," says Whiskers, looking as pleased as if he 'd found a fiver in de pocket of a old pair of jeans, "you mean de wicked Democrats!"

"Sure," I says. "Of course, when dey is at de bat, and when dey is out I mean de wicked Repub—"

"Chames!" yells Whiskers, "you is not needed any longer. Go down to de East River and see which way de tide runs!"

Well, as I was telling you, I sinks de fiver Mr. Paul gives me for de new dog collar in me jeans, and I tells Duchess dat I has de price.

"Give it to me, Chames," she says. "A

woman always buys tings cheaper dan a man," she says, "for a woman's pride is in what she gets for de price; a man's, in de price for what he gets."

So we skates into town, and when I waltzes off about me errants Duchess lets on dat she 'd get de dog collar. De next day de pup has a collar on dat fitted him like Whiskers' whiskers, and it looked most uncommon like de old one.

"It is," says Duchess, when I says it was up to her to explain. "What do you men suppose dat buckle on de collar is for—to make de collar smaller? Dat 's just like a man," she says. "He only uses a buckle to tighten wit," she says. "It woiks bote ways, Chames," she says, "and I let it out."

"How about de fiver, Duchess?" I says. "De long, crisp, clean, green bean I give you?" I says.

"I has sunk it in me bank, Chames," she says. "It was wort dat much to you to learn dat a buckle lets out as well as pulls

in. When we has been married a long, long time, *mon ami*, you will be near wise enough to be me husband,'' she says.

Say, on de level, is dat goil a wonder, or am I a farmer? What?

VI

SENTIMENTS AND INCOMES

"c'est tout un drame!"
"I runned me legs off giving it exercise."

VI

SENTIMENTS AND INCOMES

"LOOK here, Duchess," I says, "what 's up? What 's up wit Wily Widdy? If she gets too next wit Whiskers, Miss Fannie plays Mr. Paul to her so as to break up de combination; if she gets too next wit Mr. Paul, den Miss Fannie plays Whiskers to her to break up dat combination. Why," I says, "if she 's afraid Whiskers will get hooked, why don't Miss Fannie let Mr. Paul get hooked, and call it a draw?"

Duchess looked at me like she was wondering wedder it was wort while putting me wise. Dough Duchess is forn, she 's wiser on some games dan if she 'd been born on de Bowery. I spose dat 's because she had to learn to speak French when she was a little goil. Say, it must be great brain

excise for forn kids to have to learn forn langwudges when dey is young. I 'm learning French from Duchess now, and, say, it 's no cinch—and I 'm no kid, neider!

Well, she looks at me, and she says, "Master Chames," she says, "do you know your right hand from your left?"

"Sure," I says. "You leads wit your left, and you swings wit your right, when you has a chance to land on de jaw. I knows me right hand from me left," I says.

"*Très bien*," says Duchess. "But dat is more dan Miss Fannie knows."

"What for?" I says.

"For because," says Duchess.

Dat 's de way wit most women. Dey knows some tings just de way a good dog knows when you is up again your luck. Dey just knows it. But if you says "how," dey only cocks deir eyes, and looks lots, but says notting.

"How don't she know her right hand from her left?" I says.

"Dat 's a French saying," says Duchess,

"and means dat Miss Fannie, being a sister to Mr. Paul, don't know which she 'd radder not have de woise—Madame Harding for a sister-in-law, or a step-mudder."

Was I telling you dat Wily Widdy's name is "Harding"? Duchess calls it "Ardang."

"If I could tell you de story in French," she says, "which is de langwudge of sensation"—sentiment? Yes, dat 's it—"de langwudge of sentiment, I could make even you understand," she says. "But," she says, "English is only fit for facts, not for fancies," she says.

Say, when a goil gets talking again time a man better go on his way, if he has a way —and I had one.

I went to see how de bull-dog was taking his training. Little Miss Fannie said de dog must be entered at de Bench Show, so Whiskers, Mr. Paul, and me, all tries to get it fit to show. It was no use. I runned me legs off giving it excise, and we fed it fair, for fair. But de Little One would hear de

dog make a holler for more feed, and she and Miss Fannie would sneak to de stables and stuff it wit steak till it was as poddy as a jug. De gents jawed Miss Fannie till she promised to be good, but at de next hungry yelp from Towser dey 'd stuff him like a sausage.

"Baby should enter Towser for de fat prize, Fannie," says Wily Widdy when she heard de story.

"Dat 's a good tip," says Mr. Paul. "De noble animal shall be entered special by himself, and I 'll see dat he gets a prize."

Wily Widdy herself took enough prizes at de show to start a prize-package game wit. Dat 's pretty good woik for a loidy what 's always making a holler dat she has n't a penny in her jeans. Dere must be different kinds of pennies for different kinds of people. De kind de Widdy ain't got would open a bank down where I know people who ain't got none of de odder kind.

Well, we puts Towser in de show, and Little Miss Fannie and her noisse-goil goes

to hear what folks says. Some asks when was it to be killed; some, was n't it being starved to deat, poor ting; some asks what patent fodder was it booming.

When I takes de dog home Mr. Paul gives me a box of candy to give to Little Miss Fannie, wit a yarn dat it was de prize it wins. De kid was as chesty as Widdy was wit her bunch of real-ting prizes.

Listen! I says to Duchess dat Widdy must be stacking a bluff when she passes out her song and dance about being shy on long green. "Even widdies," I says, "can't run a stable and a kennel on wind, wit no dust in it," I says.

"Madame Harding has one hundred tousand francs a year," says Duchess.

"How much is dat in money?" I says.

"Twenty tousand dollars," she says, "and dat 's every cent she has."

"Dat 's fierce luck," I says. "Let us take up a prescription for her, or she 'll fetch up in de Free Lodging House before de robbins nest again," I says.

"And dat 's no joke," says Duchess, who sometimes talks real American. "Madame has a hard time paying her bills. Her maid is a fren of mine, so I knows."

"How much has we, den, if you knows so much?" I says.

"We has one hundred and twenty tousand dollars a year," says Duchess, like she was reading out of a book. "M'sieu Van Courtlandt has one hundred tousand, and M'sieu Burton has twenty tousand. So M'sieu Burton pays his own expenses, and M'sieu Van Courtlandt pays his own and Miss Fannie's. He is a lucky fadder," says Duchess, "to have a son-in-law what don't cost him notting. But Miss Fannie would done better to take M'sieu Paul, who has fifty tousand a year."

"Why did n't she take him, den? He can box better dan Mr. Burton," I says.

"Bah de box!" says Duchess. "It was de Widdy."

"De Widdy again!" I says. "She has a strong drag on our push. What is it?"

"Me dear," says Duchess, "you has no head for such affair, but I 'll try to explain, because it is shame for a valet to know so little as you about his people."

"I knows me place," I says.

"So does a hat-rack," she says. "Attend, *mon enfant:* Miss Fannie accept Mr. Burton for she tink Mr. Paul was *au mieux* wit Madame Harding."

Wait! dat 's on de level—dat *au mieux.* It means when a mug looks like he had a steady.

"What good did it do Mr. Paul for Miss Fannie to take Mr. Burton?" I says.

"She did n't do it for Mr. Paul's good," says Duchess. "She done it for revenge, for him being—*tiens! votre mot*—attentive to Madame Harding. American women is very foolish. If Miss Fannie had took Mr. Paul, dat would been proper revenge—revenge on de odder woman!"

"Sure," I says. "It was de Widdy she was gunning for."

"Of a soitainty," says Duchess. "But

Miss Fannie has kept Madame Harding from marrying Mr. Van Courtlandt or Mr. Paul, and dat's some consolation, I spose."

"Is Widdy on to dat?" I says.

"Is she a widdy?" says Duchess.

"Den why don't she rig some graft she can woik," I says, "instead of sitting into a game where she can't cut de cards?"

"Why don't you stop trying to keep your money from me?" says Duchess, wit a laugh. "You know you can't, but you keeps trying because de game is hard. Madame Harding don't have to marry—her necessities is not so great as dat!—for she can get along, in a way, wit her twenty tousand a year. De hope of beating out Miss Fannie in de end is more amusement for Madame dan marrying any of de bunch she could have by lifting an eyelid. If I was n't Miss Fannie's maid I would tell Madame how she could win."

"How?" I says.

"Madame should not remain in love wit Mr. Paul," says Duchess. "A woman in

love cannot play de marriage game smart. If Miss Fannie saw dat Madame was not in love wit Mr. Paul, she would not be so watchful. Madame could catch Miss Fannie—what you say?—off guard, and marry Mr. Van Courtlandt alive before one could cry, 'Stop tief!' *C'est tout un drame!*"

On de level, did you ever hear such nonsense as dose? Dere ain't notting tricky about Miss Fannie—not even wit de Widdy. If anybody in dis woild is on de dead level, it 's Miss Fannie; and I would n't let Duchess tell no more of her pipe dream.

"On your way!" I says to her. "Your bonnet is full of lectric fans," I says. "If Miss Fannie told Mr. Paul she 'd be a sister to him, dat score-card has been turned in, and dere ain't no ninteent hole to play, neider."

"To be sure," says Duchess. "Of course," she says. "Of a soitainty," says she, and shrugs her shoulders so dat I chases to find Maggie, de housemaid, to have a sensible goil to talk wit.

I did n't find Maggie, but I finds Mr. Paul's Chapanese valet asking was Mr. Paul to our house.

"What for, Chappy?" I says.

"Mrs. Harding telephone if Mr. Paul dine wit her dis evening," says Chap.

"I 'll see is he here," I says, and goes and asks Miss Fannie, telling her de message de Chap valet fetches.

"No," says Miss Fannie, "Mr. Paul has not been here to-day. By de way, Chames," she says, "did I give you a message dis morning to take to Mr. Paul?"

"Not as I remembers," I says.

"I may forgot it," she says. "You 'll find him at de club."

"What 's de message, if you please?" I says.

"Did n't I mention it? Tell him we expect him to dinner dis evening. Be spry, as I dislike to bore men wit messages late in de afternoon."

Say, I was spry, all right; so spry I forgot all about telling de Chap where his mas-

ter was. But listen: when I gets to de club Mr. Paul was n't bored a little bit. He was tickled to deat, and writes Miss Fannie a note saying dat he was in on de feed. Den he says, "Chames," he says, "stop to my place and tell dat ornamental—no, Oriental—young man of mine dat if any one phones for me, to answer dat I has a dinner engagement for dis evening."

I forgot to tell him dat I knowed de phone had already came.

I was just as forgetful dat day as Miss Fannie was. See?

VII

A DAY OUT WITH DUCHESS

". . . and leaves Kel wondering wedder it was yesterday, to-day or to-morrow."

VII

A DAY OUT WITH DUCHESS

ONCE in a while I meets one of me old gang what gives me a guff about being a valet. "What good is you?" he says. "Why don't you get a gent's job, tending bar, or someting high-toned, like dat?" he says. "You has no independence," he says. "You is no better dan a slave. You never has no fun, no more. You, wit your French wife! Say," he says, "what 's de matter wit a Bowery goil dat 's fly enough to give you a jolly once in a while, in American style?" he says.

I has no time to waste on a mug of his kind, so I only gives him a punch in de jaw, and let it go at dat. He ain't on to me game, and has n't brains in his coco to tumble if I tried to put him wise. We gets our bit of fun out of dis wicked woild, me and

Duchess, and I don't see many wise guys tumbling over each odder trying to get anyting else out of it. What?

Even if she is French, Duchess was n't born in Hoboken, nor yesterday. I used to tink she was n't as fly as Maggie de housemaid; but I had a chance to guess again on dat.

Listen: de odder afternoon we was taking de air for our healt, and Duchess says, "Cheemie," she says, "let us stroll over to Broadway, and see does de cars still run bote ways on *ce joli boulevard.*"

"Sure," I says. "It 's a pitty Maggie is n't wit us to jolly de Broadway cops for fair," I says. Duchess says notting.

Say, on de level, Broadway is de sweetest little old lane dat ever had a toining. I likes de Avenoo for sometings, dough. I sees more of me frens dere, to tip de wink, holding down de carriage seats; and Duchess sees more forn styles dere. But when it comes to free vaudeville and mellow drama, mixed, wit living toins done by real

artists; when it comes to gags to make you laugh on one block and pump weeps to your peepers de next; when it comes to de real rattle, slap, bang of Manhattan; de quick joke and suddent jolt; de con man and come-on; men who is wild-eyed because dey has n't a green wafer between 'em and a jump from de Bridge, and men who is wild-eyed because dere is n't ways to get rid of deir wafers fast enough, den de crooked little lane dey calls Broadway is de limit, for fair.

So we side-steps from de Avenoo, and mixes up wit de gang what was keeping de grass from growing on B.y. I tips Duchess off to a cop I knows on a corner; she gives me a nudge to play stranger, waltzes up to de copper, fetches him a paralyzing smile, and says, "*Pardon, M'sieu l'Officier*, is dis Broadway?"

"Yes, loidy," he says, trunning out his chest.

"Dear me," says Duchess, "what is it doing?"

Copper gets leery to see was it a jolly, but Duchess had on a baby stare what made her look like she would n't know de difference between dis and dat. So he says, fadderly like, "You mean where is it going?"

"No," says Duchess; "why does it go?"

"It has to," says copper. "It runs from Bowling Green to Yonkers every day."

"*Mon Dieu*," says Duchess, "it must be fast!"

"It never gets left, all right," he says, getting more brodderly dan fadderly.

"Which is de best," she says, "Bowling Green or Yonkers?"

"For what?" says he.

"For fair," says Duchess.

"A nickel is de fare for Bowling Green," he says.

"I 'd rather pay de price for bowling red," says Duchess. "Is dey bowling now?" she says.

"Who?" says he.

"De people what bowls," she says.

"Say, young woman," says copper, "if

you want to cross Broadway I 'll take you over; but I can't stop here answering fool questions no longer," he says.

"I 'll stick to its side, poor ting," says Duchess. "It would feel bad if I crossed it. I hates to be crossed—even in love," she says.

Copper was wondering would he turn in a ambulance call or rap for help, so I steps up and says, "It 's all right, Kelly," dat being his name. "If you is too shy to chat wit dis party I 'll take her off your hands," I says. "Loidy," I says to Duchess, "hook to me elbow," I says, "and we 'll chase down de line. Clutch!" I says.

I taut dat would call game, wit de laugh on Kelly; but, p'chee! Duchess turns on me like de herwin in a play, and says, "Sir! how do you dare?"

"What 's doing, Chimmie?" says Kel.

"Notting doing," I says, giving Duchess de wink to switch her wire.

"Officer," says Duchess, "dis man has me pocket-book. Arrest him!" she says.

Say, I did have it; right in me hand, too. It looked like I was caught wit de goods on me. Kelly looked at it, at me, at Duchess. Den he took off his lid to scratch his head, and he says: "Why, loidy, dis young man just now picked up your pocket-book, where you dropped it. I seen him." Wit dat he passes me a wise wink like he was giving me a chance, if I 'd swiped de boodle, to square meself.

"Hully chee!" I says. "De copper tinks I swiped de kettle. Get level, Duchess, or he 'll run me in. Get level!"

Duchess hands me a haughty stare, fetches Kel a bow, and says, "I has not de honor of knowing dis young man, but I 'll try to reform him."

She takes me elbow, we strikes a gait up de lane, and leaves Kel wondering wedder it was yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow.

"What is de answer?" I says to Duchess.

"One hears much about what a smart young woman Maggie is," says she. "Some one else is stupid, eh?"

"I 'm out," I says. "Count ten. You is fly, all right."

"Why you never say so?" says she. "Why always is it Maggie who fly is?"

"Oh, she 's only Maggie," says I.

"You mean she not much is, eh? Very well; but remember, *mon ami*, dat it is a foolish husband who praise odder goils to his wife. It cause less trouble to a man to praise a woman to her own face dan to praise her to his wife's face. Dat is not English saying, but it is true. Was all de clever goils born in America, eh?" she says.

"De horse is on me, me dear," I says. "If you 'll lend me de price I 'll blow you off to a bottle of beer and a lobster."

"No," says Duchess. "It is waste of money for a married woman to buy lobstair. Let us go where one can see de fashions, and I 'll buy tea."

"Tea is medicine," I says.

"Woise!" she says. "It is poison. But where it is soive dis time in de afternoon one sees de latest gowns brought from Paris

to New York by *les belles dames de Cheecago.*"

"What 's de matter wit de belles of New York?" I says.

"Dey is no such foolish tings," says she. "Dey lets Cheecago belles pay de government fines for buying gowns in Paris—den copies de fashions."

"Dere is no Maudie Müllers gaddering hayseed on dis island, sure," I says.

Well, we breaks into a swell tea-room, where dere was Dagos, dressed like monkeys, playing forn banjos behind some bushes, wit now and den a song trun in to boot. Dere was about a million women drinking tea like it was good, and my, my! how dey was chinning. Dere was a small bunch of men dere, too, and dey looked like de tea was n't so woise.

"P'chee, Duchess," I says, "since Sir Tummis did n't lift de yacht cup all America is making good for him by lifting his tea-cups."

Duchess only laughs; and when a waiter

says what would be ours she gives him de order in French. Soon he chases back wit a tea lay-out, only de cups was shy, on size.

"Put all de sugar and milk dat 's coming to me in me foist cup, Duchess," I says, "for dat 's de only part of tea dat is n't knock-out drops to me."

She pours a cup and hands it over without a woid. Honest, I taut foist it was cold tea, and no milk nor sugar, at dat. Just as I was going to make a holler I gets a sniff of it, and I tumbles. It was all right for fair, and dere was no kick coming to my side of de table.

"Dis is de popular brand of winter tea," says Duchess. "If it was mixed wit French, instead of Italian, vermoot, it would suit me taste better."

"Is de whole bunch here drinking de same goods?" I says.

"Shopping, matinées, calling, is hard woik," she says, "and de loidies you see here has all been doing such tings. Dis brand of tea restores deir noives."

"If dey needs it," I says, "why not order it on de level? What 's de use playing a con game, when nobody is conned?"

"For a married man you is de most ignorankist about women I ever see," she says. "Woman is too implicated"—no, complicated—"women is too complicated to enjoy anyting dat is not secret."

Well, I was having de time of me life wit de cup of tea, and was trying to rig a graft what would jolly Duchess to stand for anodder treat, when I sees Whiskers and Widdy float in and collar a corner table. Say, I tink widdies would get lost if it was n't for corners. You finds 'em in corners, wedder you is looking for 'em or not. Duchess says we must chase; for if Whiskers cops us dere he 'd jaw de heads off us for not knowing our places. So we chases.

I knowed I 'd find our carriage outside if Whiskers was inside, and I did. I calls it up, telling Duchess dat she 'd been a good goil, so I 'd take her home in style. I told

coachy dat I 'd take his place on de box de next time he wanted a day off if he 'd take us home and get back before Whiskers wanted him. It was n't far, so in we bundles; and we was n't de foist maid and valet dat 's played dat game on de Avenoo, neider.

Just as we were leaving de carriage, a couple of doors below ours, de housekeeper, walking home, cops us. My, my! but she ragged us good. She swore she 'd tell Whiskers and have us trun out of our jobs for impudent rascals. I taut to meself dat de jig was up for fair, but Duchess says, "Why, Housekeeper," she says, "what a lovely hat you has on! If you 'd let me fix de fedder and de bow a little, you could n't tell it from one I just see on de beautiful Countess d'Umsky. Could she, Cheemes?"

"Housekeeper," I says, "let Duchess fix your lid, and you 'll be a dead ringer for de Countess."

"Well," she says, "come into my room, Hortense, and try what you can do for me hat."

"Let Cheemes come, too," says Duchess. "We has walked so far we is faint wit hunger," she says.

"You is de impudentest soivants on de place," says housekeeper, when we was in her room, Duchess rigging de hat to beat de band, "but I 'll not tell on you dis time," she says.

"Look at dear old Housekeeper!" says Duchess, putting de hat on de old loidy's head and giving it an upper cut dat made it look like ready money.

"She looks like de Queen of Ireland. It 's good you caught me early, Duchess," I says.

Well, after dat we did n't have a ting wit de housekeeper but chicken pie, plum pudding, and sherry. Say, it was a close call, dough.

A story? No, I 've been chinning too long about a day out wit Duchess. As I was telling you, we gets a bit of fun out of dis wicked woild, but sometimes me hair toins gray getting it.

VIII

A TENEMENT THANKSGIVING

Mrs. Murphy's Might . . . or . . . the Ballade of Martin Halligan's Aunt.

VIII

A TENEMENT THANKSGIVING

"ME dear," says Miss Fannie to Mr. Burton, her hubby, "are you going wit me to-morrow?"

"What 's to-morrow?" says he.

"It 's me annual Tanksgiving call on me old frens in de tenements," she says.

Mr. Burton looks so weary you would n't ask him to hold his breat, and he says, "Me dear Fannie," he says, "it gives me a headache in me head to go to de tenements. Chames is your proper escort, if you must do such foolishness."

"Let me go," says Mr. Paul. "I was tinking of ending me life," he says, "having done everyting else I could tink of; but if you 'll take me along slumming wit you, Fannie," he says, "it will brace me drooping spirits."

"Dat 's a good chap, Paul," says Mr. Burton. "Go wit Fannie in me place, and I 'll do someting nice for you one day," he says.

It 's de way wit most tings dat Miss Fannit does like dat. Mr. Burton gets cold feet, and Mr. Paul sits into de game in his place. I says dat to Duchess, and she says, "Cold at de feet, eh? I has de honor to obsoive," she says, "dat it is unwise for gentlemen to get cold feet when hearts is trumps."

Duchess, being a forn goil, don't know dat dere ain't no trumps in poker—and poker is de only game what gives cold feet.

Remember me telling you long time ago dat Miss Fannie was a teacher in a mission school where I used to live? She cut loose from de charity game as a steady job when she was married, but every Tanksgiving she swings round me old ward, visiting hard-luck cases I hears of. If it was n't for her, dere's a lot of 'em down dere what would tink Tanksgiving was de great American joke. And dat 's no joke, too.

Well, Tanksgiving morning we starts out, me on de box wit coachy, and Miss Fannie and Mr. Paul inside wit so many bundles we looks like a delivery wagon at Christmas-time.

After we called and said "howdy" and left bundles at a lot of old folks, where Mr. Paul jollied de game till dey forgot dey was up against it, we went to a woman I knowed of, what was playing in de hardest luck ever. Honest, she ain't much older dan Miss Fannie, but she 's a widdy wit five kids, de biggest of 'em about Little Miss Fannie's size. De widdy earns de price of life selling poipers by Brooklyn Bridge; so she was all right till she took sick and could n't sell de extras. But she sold about everyting else she had, to get grub for de kids. I heard de story, and I touched Duchess for a fiver and put de widdy on Easy Street. I knew she 'd be to de end of de street by Tanksgiving, so I told Miss Fannie about her.

Well, we climbs up to her place, four

flights, two rooms back, and who do you tink lets us in? me old fren Mrs. Murphy! I had de basket of grub, Mr. Paul de bundle of warm tings to wear, and Miss Fannie a big bunch of dose raggy flowers wit de dinky name, what smells bitter and sweet—chris—chrisum—well, call 'em Chris Andersons, and let it go at dat. When Murphy sees us she says to de widdy, what was in bed, "Look a-here, dearie," she says, "here 's de divvil's own, Chimmie Fadden, witout a track nor yet a lecture for yez, but wit jist wicked food from Miss Fannie for youse and de little ones; here 's Small Bottles, wit nary a 'Precipt f'r de Poor,' but on'y a bundle of warm tings f'r youse and de kids to wear; and here 's Miss Fannie, hersilf, smiling, like a saint—but de wicked woman has n't a sermon at all, on'y a bunch of flooers f'r to cheer yez wit."

Say, when Murphy starts talking you could n't shut her up wit a cotton-press.

"Good morning, me dear," says Miss Fannie to de widdy. "I 'm glad you has

such a cheerful companion as Mrs. Murphy wit you."

"I 'm not de on'y cheerful wan dat 's been here to-day," says Murphy. "We had a gang of callers here already; and dey wept and lectured and left tracks."

"Tracks?" says Mr. Paul.

"Here 's wan of 'em," says Murphy, handing Mr. Paul a track wit reading on it. "Precipts for de Poor," it was called.

Miss Fannie shed her bonnet and coat, spread de flowers around de room, and got busy wit de bundles; while Mr. Paul peeps at de track like he was tickled to deat wit it.

"Me good woman," he says, shaking de track at de widdy, "I suspect you has been improvident," he says. "How," he says, "has you re-invested your dividends? What use has you made of de rich rewards of your labors?"

"I do not understand," says de widdy, looking scared.

"Paul," says Miss Fannie, "be sensible."

"Fannie," he says, "never before in

me life has I been sensible. Have you wasted your wealt in riotous living," he asks de widdy, "or played de races?"

"She 's a awful spendtrift," says Murphy, winking at Mr. Paul. "Manny 's de time," she says, "I has begged her to soak away part of her earnings—if on'y five dollars a day—in de saving-bank. But what says she? She says she earns on'y five dollars a week!"

"A weak subterfuse!" says Mr. Paul. "How many children has you?" he says to de widdy.

"Five, praise de saints!" says she.

"Only five!" he says. "Den if you wastes all your earnings pampering 'em wit luxuries you is self-convicted of wicked waste. Dis track," he says, "proves dat tree dollars a week is easy going for a family of six," he says.

"It would be enough," de widdy says, "if it was n't for a doctor for de baby, and medicine, and—and dere was days I was n't strong enough to woik, and—and—oh, sir,

I tries to be saving, but rent day comes, and sometimes a neighbor has n't anyting, and we helps each odder."

"Listen to de wretch make excuses for de sins dat 's on her!" says Murphy. "She confessed de same shameful troots to de odder callers, but all de same de kind souls left her de track to show dat dey forgive her."

"We should practise economy—even in tracks," says Mr. Paul.

Wit dat Miss Fannie orders us to chase ourselves, while she and Murphy fixes de kids in Little Miss Fannie's duds. When we gets to de street Mr. Paul says, "Quick, Chames, take me to de best restaurant on de Bowery. Dose tings in our basket is jellies and jams and puddins and dinky stuff. Having took me degree as Doctor of Philosophy, I know what kind of medicine is wanted in dat widdy's room."

I never saw Mr. Paul get such a move on, except when I gives him boxing-lessons. We hustles to de restaurant, where he buys

a whole roast toikey, and puts it in de carriage in its warming-pan—coachy near fell off de box wit shame—and we fills a big basket wit hot vegetables, mince-pies, celery, nuts, raisins, and I don't know what besides. When we got back, Miss Fannie and Murphy had de kids scrubbed and dressed; de widdy was sitting up in one of Miss Fannie's easy gowns, tea was making, and tings was joyful for fair.

Mr. Paul and me never peeps a woid, but rushes de toik and vegetables and tings on de table, and den Mr. Paul, sitting on a basket at one end, says to de widdy, "Madam is served."

Honest, you should seen de kids! Deir eyes near pops outter deir heads when Mr. Paul begins carving. Murphy and me waits on table, Miss Fannie cuts up toik for de youngsters, and makes a plate for de widdy. De kids was scared, foist, but Mr. Paul says dat de one what eat de most toik could have de most raisins, and den dey sails in like dey never had a chance to eat all dey

wants before in deir lives. It ain't no sure bet dat dey ever did.

I 'd sneaked some beer in de restaurant, and when Murphy and me had wished de top of de morning to each odder over a glass or two, and when de kids was as poddy as so many little puppies, and when de widdy was smiling and looking so fit we could see she was taking de right medicine, all right, Mr. Paul says, "Now, loidies and gents, de great beartone solyist, Mr. Fadden, will oblige."

I did. I sings me song, "On de Banks of de Bronx, where me Summer Goil hangs out," and de widdy and kids laughed like dey 'd fed deir faces tree times a day all deir lives.

"Fannie," says Mr. Paul, when tings was quiet again, "how long since we sing a duet?" he says.

Miss Fannie got red, and says, "Oh, Paul, dat was yout'ful nonsense."

"It 's a time for nonsense," says Mr. Paul.

Wit dat he clears his pipes and starts up, and after a little Miss Fannie joins in. Gee! I never knowed dey could sing togedder like dat. Dey must had lots of practice, once. Next Mrs. Murphy passes us out a old-country song, and it was a strawberry! Dis is one voise—put de spelling like it is on dis poiper:

Here 's a health to Martin Halligan's aunt!
And I 'll tell you the reason why:
She ates because she 's hungry, and she dhrinks
because she 's dhry.
If she e'er saw a man stop the coorse of the can,
Martin Halligan's aunt would cry:
"Arrah! fill up your glass, and let the toast
pass!
How d' ye know but your neighbor 's dhry?"

When we was to home Mr. Paul says to me, on de quiet, "Chames, what will keep our frens from getting too hungry until de widdy gets strong?"

I tells him dat if dey had five dollars a week, dead sure, dey would be on soft velvet. He passes me out a bill, and says,

"Dis will fix tings for twenty weeks. See dat de widdy gets it—five a week."

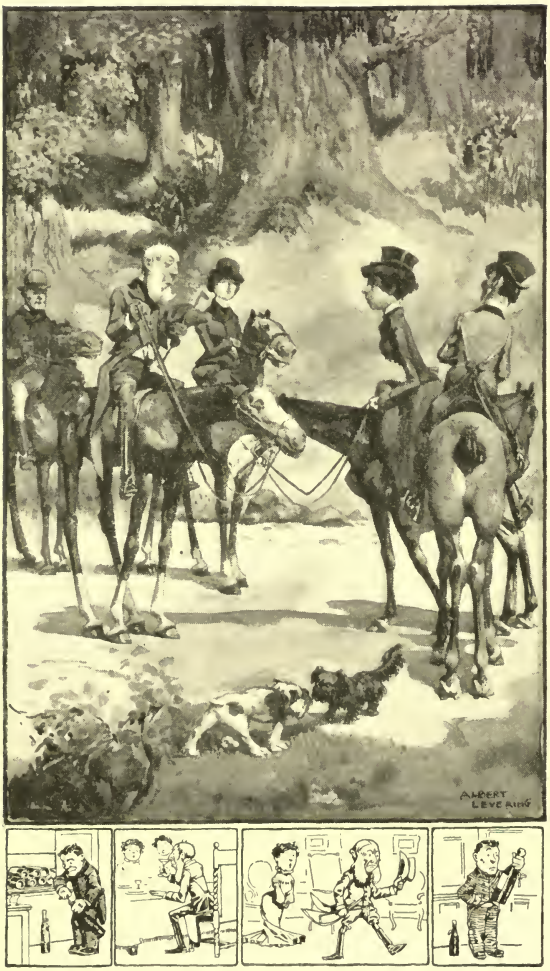
Dat evening Mr. Burton says to him, "Well, Paul, did you give Fannie's pampered paupers someting to be tankful for?"

"Dey gives me someting to be tankful for," says Mr. Paul.

"You 're lucky," says Mr. Burton. "I 'm hanged if I see what to give tanks for—wid stocks going as dey are now."

IX

A STUDY IN PURPLE



The effect of Purple on wine and widows.

IX

A STUDY IN PURPLE

POIPLE is a good color—I don't tink! Listen: Widdies is all kinds, and some is wonders. Remember me telling you of Wily Widdy what me and Duchess played de con game on—wit her otternobile? For a week after dat Whiskers did not speak her name, and I taut she was booked for de woods for fair. Not a bit like it. She squared herself so dat Whiskers knowed it was n't her he seen taking a frenly glass of *eau sucrée* at de Cottage.

Wait a minute: Are you on to "*eau sucrée*"? Duchess passed dat out to me. It 's French: French name; French drink. Dat 's right. It ain't a ting except dinky sugar and water, but strong-armed mugs takes it as if it was as good as beer; and gets gay on it, at dat.

Let me tell you: Duchess has a goil fren what was a loidy's-maid, but now is married to a Frenchman what 's de cook in his own little restaurant. His wife, de goil we know, sits behind de counter making change for de waiters, so dat dey is sure to get more of it dan de customers meant to give 'em. Are you on to dat trick? Cop it de next time you gets your change in a French restaurant.

Once, when me and Duchess has a day off, we chases down to de restaurant to say *bon chour* to de goil. It was between meals. Hubby was up from de kitchen, and dere was a couple of husky Frenchmen dere—one was a champeen wrestler—and dey was all drinking *eau sucrée*, and talking to beat a band of cart-tail spellbinders. We sits in, and de goil says, "*Kay vully voo, M'sieu Chaques?*"

"Oh, a little of de same, tanks," I says.

"*Esky soy*, de 'same'?" says she. "We have not of de same."

"*De l'eau sucrée,*" I says, "wit de low ball on de side," I says.

She tumbles den, laughs, and fetches de sugar and water and a bottle. I sinks about two fingers of rye in de glass, and de French mugs watches to see me drop dead when I drinks it. *Grog Américain* dey calls it. Honest, dey gets more gay and talks more on deir dinky drink dan I do on me toddy.

As we was waltzing home I says to Duchess, "Dat was de trouble wit your fren Napoleon at de battle of Ballyloo," I says. "Me fren Wellington," I says, "him being Irish, takes a timbleful or so of de real stuff before he starts out to do business on de morning of Ballyloo—de wedder being chilly and damp. It puts de proper fighting spirit into him, and he scores once more for Ireland. He did n't say a ting. He just fit. But your fren Napoleon," I says, "he calls for a glass of *eau sucrée.* And what happens? Instead of fighting, he just talks. While Napoleon was making up tings what would look proper on tomb-

stones, Mike Wellington was making tings what would look proper under tombstones. See, Duchess?'' I says.

But Duchess got haughty, and only says, ''Chames, I do not know wedder you is most ignorant or most impudent.''

''You has anodder guess,'' I says. She gives me de silent trun-down.

Listen: we ain't de only folks what quarrel about tings to drink. Whiskers and Mr. Paul is always playing a hot twosome to see which can get de finest wine. Dey is boss judges of fine wine, for fair; nobody can flimflam 'em in de game. When one gets some what 's better dan de odder's, de odder is near croisy till he pegs up one better still. A while ago Mr. Paul landed a lot wit a German name dat run twice around de bottles—what had poiple prize ribbons tied around deir necks, too. He got all dere was. It was n't much, but de price was. When I opened de bottle he sent Whiskers to try, Whiskers sniffed and sniffed, and sipped and sipped, and it took

him an hour to de glass, it tickled him so. He near trun a fit, dough, when Mr. Paul would n't sell him half of it. "No," says Mr. Paul. "I would n't part wit a case of it for love or money."

"Love has notting to do wit it," Whiskers snorts. "I 'll double your price to you."

"Nay, nay," says Mr. Paul. "I 'll keep it all, as an inducement for you to dine often at me table, sir," he says.

But I was going to tell you how Wily Widdy squared herself wit Whiskers. We was all out riding, up to our place on de Sound one day, when we meets her. Hark: Whenever Miss Fannie rides, I rides too. Whiskers says to me long ago, "Chames, when Miss Fannie goes riding you ride behind her, no matter who else is along. And, Chames," he says, "if ever you take your eyes off her horse I 'll take you out to de stable and show you anodder use for a hitching-strap besides hitching."

Say, I 'm getting to be such a good rider

I 'm tinking of entering meself in de Horse Show next year. I says dat to Mr. Paul, and asks him what class I 'd enter meself in. He taut awhile, and says, "Well, Chames, you soitainly would take all de prizes in de 'D' class."

Well, we was riding along de road and suddently meets Wily Widdy, wit her English groom what promised me a fight on his day off, but he 's shy on holidays since den. We stops, and Widdy hands out a polite "howdy" to all hands; Whiskers getting red, dough he had on his cold-storage front.

"I 'm sprised," he says to her, "not to see you in your ottermobile," he says.

"I 've not used it since I was over to lunch wit Fannie," she says.

"I spose you got it out of order racing back from de Cottage de same day," he says.

"I never was to de Cottage," she says. "I went nowhere but to Fannie's."

Whiskers looks queer a minute, den he

says, "Is dere any odder ottermobile but yours, wit a poiple-painted body, in dis neck of woods?"

"No," says Widdy. "I 'm in half-mourning, you know," she says, wit a smile, "but poiple disagrees wit me complexion, so I has me traps painted poiple instead of me frocks. If me mobe was to de Cottage dat day," she says, "one of your soivants must took it dere," and she passes me out a half "I 'm-on-to-you" look.

Whiskers pipes me off, too; but I was making faces at de groom, and let on I did n't see him.

Whiskers acts like a pebble had been took from his shoe; Widdy gives 'em all a invite to her house to lunch, and we rides over dere; Whiskers and Widdy talking fast to make up for lost time.

When I 'd stabled de horses, bossed de groom, and asked him for a fight he was too busy to give me, Miss Fannie sent for me. She says dat Widdy's butler was away, and told me to take his place. I goes

to de pantry and wine-cellar, makes me lay-out for lunch, and, when de cook tells me, I says to de folks, "Lunch is soived."

"I has n't a ting for you to eat," says Widdy, "except pompano, boned squab, and a salad."

"We 'll try to stay our hunger wit dat," says Whiskers, getting real kittenish.

Tings moved along as lovely as a winning horse when you 've a bet on, till Whiskers raised de glass of wine I 'd soived him. He sniffed and sniffed it, and toined his head on one side like he seen a man he knowed but could n't remember his name. Den he sipped and sipped it, and all of a suddent he trun a nickel-steel look at Mr. Paul. But Mr. Paul was talking to Miss Fannie, and his mug was more innocenter dan a caddie wit his foot on de lost golf ball you is looking for.

Whiskers got good and red, and when I filled his glass again he takes a peep at de bottle, what had a poiple ribbon around its neck.

When he 'd done choking he says to Widdy, "I see, ma'am, dat you puts your wine in half-mourning, too."

She gives a quick look at de bottle, glares at me, and bites her lip like it was a tough proposition; but before she says anyting Mr. Paul begins talking so fast no one else could trun in a remark till Widdy got her second wind, and came up smiling wit a game of talk about de opray.

My, my! but Whiskers was frosty after dat.

When we was home Mr. Paul folleyed me to de stable and says, "Chames, you child of Satan," he says, "why did you soive dat wine? It was not de kind you was ordered to soive," he says.

"I taut it would tickle Whiskers to have a glass or two of it under his belt again," I says.

Mr. Paul taut awhile, like he was wondering if it would n't ease his feelings to take de end of a hitching-strap to me, but he only groans a little, and says, "You is

entitled,'' he says, ''to your own opinion of what gives pleasure to Mr. Van Courtlandt,'' he says; ''but what wit poiple mobes, and poiple-ribbon wine, he is getting radder more of de royal color in his landscape dan is good for him.''

What do you tink of a real gent passing out langwudge like dose?

When I spins de whole yarn to Duchess she yells murder wit laughing. ''*Mon Dieu, mon enfant!*'' she says; ''for a Bowery boy you is de woise case of farmer I ever see,'' she says.

''On your way, hussy!'' I says.

But I don't know yet what de joke is.

X

THE HORSE SHOW

"De Hunter class is shooting round de ring and de High-jumper class is near outter sight."

X

THE HORSE SHOW

TO de Horse Show was we? I wonder! You could n't lose us. Say, Duchess don't know a New Jersey steer from a Kentucky torrowbred, but you could n't keep her from de Horse Show wit bayonets.

"Let us go," she says to me, "and see is New York getting more civilized."

"On your way!" I says. "It is de most civilized village dis side de Harlem," I says. "In de driving class for trotters, in de hackney class, in four-in-hands, tandems, in all de signs of civilization and refinement," I says, pinching some of Mr. Paul's woids, "New York is a strawberry for fair," I says.

"Truly," says Duchess, "de entry-list is lovely," she says. "I was hearing Miss

Fannie tell," she says, "of one entry of amytist-colored clot' and lustrous panne velvet, wit Persian 'broideries."

"Dat must be a monkey," I says. "It 's no horse."

"Anodder entry," says Duchess, not listening to me woids of wisdom, "is a blouse bodice, slightly gaddered on de shoulders and at de belt, bote front and back. Let us hasten," she says, "to de Horse Show."

"Sure," I says. "Let us get a move on. De hunter class is shooting round de ring, and de high-jumper class is near out of sight."

"It opens in a V-shape, wit all its edges bound wit Persian lamb," says Duchess.

"On your way!" I says. "To de woods wit you! Do you tink it is a country fair? Dere is no lambs at de Horse Show," I says, "barring de bunch dat opens wine in de wine-room."

Well, Little Miss Fannie fell off her bike and bumped her conk one day, so of course Miss Fannie, Mr. Burton, and Whiskers

wanted no Horse Show dat night, and Duchess got de tickets for de box. I wored one of Mr. Burton's dress suits, and it fitted me so dudey I had a yard of pants to roll up at de bottom. But Duchess was in it for style up to de limit. She had a dress Miss Fannie give her, and, honest, a strawberry was a turnip alongside her!

When we floats to de box Duchess hists a lornyet to her peeper, and takes a peep at folks around us wit such side on her I felt like giving away brownstone fronts on de Avenoo. I was watching Mr. Paul in de ring, driving his four-in-hand like he does everyting else—as if it was so easy it made him tired—and when he swung around by us he takes a peep at our box, looking for Whiskers, I spose. He seen me, tips me a solemn wink, and when he wins de foist prize he strolls over to us, wit his hands in his pockets. He leans over de box, and says, "Hortense"—what is Duchess' name—"you is looking like a bunch of *fleur-de-lis* dis evening."

"*Merci, M'sieu,*" says Duchess, passing him out a bow dat paralyzed de mugs rubbering to see who Mr. Paul was talking to. "Tell me, M'sieu Paul," she says, "why all de big space in de center is toined into a stable? If de loidies was let to promenade dere, dey could show deir gowns twice as well. Is dere not stalls enough in New York for de horses," she says, "witout wasting good space on 'em here?"

"Madam Fadden," says Mr. Paul—I always dies when I hears Duchess called Mrs. Fadden—"you has wisdom as well as wit. Having a pull here," he says, "I shall arrange next year to put de horses in de boxes and de loidies in de ring."

He gives me a wink to folley him, and says, "Chames, would you like a glass of wine at de Waldorf?"

"I 'd radder have a glass of beer on de Bowery. I 'm not proud. What 's doing?"

"Dere is a young gent here," he says, "who has notting but boodle to boin, and is looking for a fire."

"I has a match," I says.

"So I recalled," says Mr. Paul. "Me young fren comes from Philadelphia," he says, "but I wishes him no harm on dat account. His brodder wired me to see dat de youngster had a good time, but not too good."

"What 's doing?" I says again.

"I shall present him to you and Hortense," says Mr. Paul, "and I suspect he 'll not quite catch your names. But if he heard you call Hortense 'Duchess,' de plot would ticken so you could n't stir it wit a golf club."

Well, pretty soon Mr. Paul chases up to de box wit a nice Willie in tow. "Madam de Tarumsky," says Mr. Paul, "I begs to resent me fren Mr. Rittenhouse," he says, and Duchess passes out a coy glance to Ritty. "Mr. Fahdaning," says Mr. Paul to me, "shake hands wit me fren," he says.

I says notting for a while, for Ritty struck such a gait I was out of de running. But when he 'd asked Duchess about de

loidies in all de boxes—say, you should heard de pedigree she give some of 'em! Police!—I saw me opening, and jumps in wit, "Duchess," I says, and at de woid little Ritty near fell out de box, "me dear Duchess," I says, "*je suis fatigué*," I says, "and I has a toist on me like a dry pump."

"Let us go home," says Duchess, tumbling quick, for she 's furder from being a farmer dan de Bronx is from de Battery, "let us go home and have a boid and a bottle," she says.

"Is it not part of de Horse Show, your Grace," says Ritty, "to have de boid at de Waldorf?"

"To be sure," she says. "When one has seen de animals perform, one goes to see 'em feed."

"Good!" says Ritty. "Your Grace has quite de wit. May I have de pleasure of showing your Grace and Mr. Fahdaning de animals at feed?"

"You 're on," I says.

"*Vous êtes très-aimable!*" says Duchess, fetching him a smile dat stunned him.

Well, we hikes out of de Garden, flags a carriage, and rolls to Mr. Waldorf's inn, where a million odder dry-and-hungries was headed. All tables what was n't filled had chairs toined up; but Duchess gives de boss waiter a line of forn talk, and he hustled a table for us like we was rolling cigarettes in coupons.

"What would your Grace fancy to eat?" asks Ritty.

"Notting at all," says Duchess, giving me heart failure. "Not a ting, me dear M'sieu Wittenwouse, unless it was a mere glass of wine, a bit of terrapin, a broiled lobster"—she passes me out a ghost of a wink at dat—"a broiled live lobster, a reedboid or two, and a *biscuit Tortoni*. Notting else—really notting!"

Listen: Ritty has de making of a dead-game sport, for fair. He asks for de private wine list, and orders a quart dat costs an X per bot. He has de boned terrapin

sent in cold, and cooks it himself on a chafing-dish; and all de time was telling us what a warm proposition Philadelphia is.

Well, I kept de bottle from getting stuck in de cooler, and, by de time we was feeding, de plug was out of anodder X raise bottle, and we was de cheerfulest woikers in de dining-room. Ritty was "your Grac"-ing Duchess till folks at odder tables was rubbering us to beat a windmill.

When Ritty put up de price—and de size of de meal ticket never jarred him—Duchess tips me de wink to fly de coop, and we bucks de center till we made a touch-down in Toity-fort Street. Just den Perkins, our butler, who was having his night off, comes along, and when he sees me and Duchess wit de swell Willie, he gives us de ha-ha. "Chames," he says, "you 'd better go home; your master wants you."

"Fellow!" I says. "On your way, fellow!" I says.

"Who is he?" says Ritty. "Shall I trash him?"

"He is a drunken butler I had to discharge last week," I says.

It was a long-shot bluff, but it went, for Perky was so mad he could n't speak.

We waltzes up de Avenoo, and stops at de swellest house in it, where a goil Duchess knows is a maid. "Sorry," says Duchess to Ritty, "dat I can't ask you in to smoke a cigarette, but de house is all tored up by decorators—I can't even get in by de front entrance."

Den she rings de bell at de soivants' door. Has she a noive? What! Ritty says *bon soir*, says he has de time of his life, chases —and we calls on de help!

A few days after dat de loidy what lives in dat house says to Miss Fannie, "Don't your husband's valet call your maid 'Duchess'?"

"Yes," says Miss Fannie. "What mischief has dey been doing now?"

"Notting very bad," says de loidy, wit a laugh, "but if your maid is fond of flowers and candy, send her to my house. About

a ton of 'em comes every day from Philadelphia, addressed to de 'Duchess de Tarumsky.' I refused to take 'em in, but my maid receives 'em, and says she knows who dey is for.''

Miss Fannie told Duchess, she told me, and I told Mr. Paul. He looked tautful awhile, and den says, ''I will call on de loidy, and square you and Hortense, Chames. But de next time I puts your foot on de Philadelphia end of de social ladder, don't try to stretch it to New York; nor,'' he says, ''put your foot tru it.''

XI

AN IRONING-BOARD IN POLITICS

"Paul, drink up! Chames, get out!"

XI

AN IRONING-BOARD IN POLITICS

"FAREWELL! I 'm going to reform," says Mr. Paul to Whiskers.

Dey was having deir regular chin-chin, wit Miss Fannie sitting near by woiking some fancy-woik what is never done. Dat was all dere was in de library, except me, fussing about as per usual to see dat de wood fire was fired, and dat nobody died of toist or hunger. Mr. Burton was to de club, also as per usual.

"Nobody could go furder dan you, Paul," says Whiskers, "if you really is going so far as reform."

"I likes a long joiney," says Mr. Paul. "Do not let dis shock overcome you, sir," he says, "but I am going to vote de Republican ticket someting less dan tree years from now."

"Chames!" yells Whiskers, "bring a quart of Special Vintage. Fannie," he says, "you must join us in a glass! Dis is de joyfulest hour of me life; for," he says, "dere is more joy over one Democrat dat reforms dan over nine mugwumps dat keeps on writing letters to de poipers."

"I am deeply touched," says Mr. Paul, taking de glass I hands him, "by dis initiation into de ranks of de truly good. Yes," he says, "in nineteen hundred and four I shall vote for Mark Hanna for President."

At dat Whiskers makes a holler. "Bah!" he says. "Senator Hanna has became a Democrat. He has associated himself wit vagabones who organize strikes. He 's no longer a Republican. He 's no better dan a Democrat!"

"If dat is so," says Mr. Paul, "we 'll drink dis bottle to celebrate de reform of Mr. Hanna. Reform is de ting, after all," he says, "and it don't frost no cake wedder it is Mark or me dat gets it."

Whiskers looked like he did n't just know

de answer, but Miss Fannie says, "I taut Mr. Roosevelt was to be de next President."

"Of course," says Whiskers. "Dat 's it exactly. Paul don't know as much politics as you do, me dear."

"I am shy on de fine points of de game," says Mr. Paul, "but I did tink dat de man what got de delegates got de nomination—for self, or fren."

"Well," says Whiskers, "everybody wants Mr. Roosevelt to get de nomination, so he 'll get it."

"I see," says Mr. Paul. "Just de same as Daniel Webster, Roscoe Conkling, Justice Field, and Tom Reed got it."

"Not at all," says Whiskers. "Mr. Roosevelt will get de delegates dis time dat Mr. McKinley got last time."

"From Mr. Hanna?" asks Mr. Paul, easy like.

"From de people," says Whiskers.

"For instance," says Mr. Paul, "you is one of de people, so am I. Will we give him a delegate?"

"Soitainly!" says Whiskers. "I 'll look into dis matter to-morrow. I 'll find out how delegates is made—and make one."

"Dey is no longer hand-made," says Mr. Paul, "or I should make a few meself. Handicraft is a lost art in politics and shoemaking. Machinery has put de artisan out of business. Delegates is made," he says, "by machinery, and Mr. Hanna has de latest invention in dat line, well oiled, and doing stunts at de old stand. Mr. Roosevelt will make a good administration, but he won't make delegates. De two trades is no more alike dan painting a picture and printing a chromo."

"You make phrases, but not sense, Paul," says Whiskers. "If Mr. Hanna had kept in de party, instead of becoming a scoffer at established institutions by consorting openly wit de most dangerous elements of society, de Republican party might rewarded him some day by making him President."

"Mr. Hanna is a good-natured gent," says Mr. Paul, "and if de Republican party

don't reward him by making him President, he 'll reward de Republican party by making himself President. He knows a good ting when he owns it."

"Paul," says Whiskers, "dis is revolutionary and siditious! If your reform brings you to dis state of mind you 'd better backslide, radder dan pollute de pure waters of Republism by de poisoned shafts of treason and Democracy. You is woise," he says, "dan Lucifer leading his legion against de batterments of heaven."

Say, I don't know Lucifer, but he must be a comic mug, for when Whiskers names him Miss Fannie and Mr. Paul laughs like dey had a fit. Whiskers laughed too, but he laughs like he was trying to side-step an upper-cut. Den he says, "I was too severe wit you, Paul. We Republicans," he says, "should remember dat you Democrats can't help being wicked. We should pray for you, radder dan point de finger of scorn."

"I am sorry I introduced de subject," says Mr. Paul.

Den dey talks about de opray, and dinky tings what is woise dan knock-out drops to listen to, so I asks Miss Fannie could I have de rest of de evening off.

"I has to go down home and enroll," I says.

"Enroll what?" asks Whiskers.

"Enroll in me precinct club," I says.

"But de election is just over," he says.

"Anodder one has just begun," I says. "Anyway," I says, "if you 'll excuse me putting in a woid, elections ain't politics no more dan a cash-register is a restaurant. De election," I says, "is like a kid counting his money after selling poipers all day. He did n't sell poipers all day to see how well he could count money at de end; he 's counting money to see how well he sold poipers all day."

"Dis is mysticism," says Mr. Paul.

"At de late election," says Whiskers, "one party was so punished it has no heart to train for anodder election."

Mr. Paul passes me out a wink on de side,

so I says: "Which felly in a prize-fight takes and gets de most care between rounds? It 's de mug what was to de bad in de last round. Dat 's right," I says. "He gets de rubbing, sponging, icing, fanning, de tonic, and de wise woid," I says. "But de mug what was to de good in de last round is so busy telling how he done it, and shaking hands wit himself and frens, he forgets de next round till de bell rings. Den he gets a punch in de solo plexer what makes him wish he had de wind he just wasted telling what a wonder he is. A good punch is sometimes landed by accident, but not often," I says. "De knock-out punches in de last election was not give by no amatoor," I says. "Dey was give by a handy scrapper and de son of a scrapper. May I go now, Miss Fannie?" I says.

"Tell me foist," she says, "why you enroll in your precinct club," she says.

"Because," I says, "me modder gets good wages doing fancy ironing at home for de Dago what runs de French laundry

for de Austrians in Little Germany on Second Avenoo," I says.

"Chimmie's modder is a foist-class laundress on fine woik," says Miss Fannie. "I has tried to have her take soivice wit me, but she said she 'd radder keep her little home for Chames to visit on his days off."

"Dat 's right," I says, "and to help her keep her home I 'tends to me politics," I says.

"Will you kindly tell me what in de woild all dis has to do wit politics?" says Whiskers, blinking like dere was a fly on his glasses.

"Chames can tell," says Mr. Paul.

"Sure," I says. "Easy! De Dago what runs de laundry says he would n't pay me modder de good wages she 'd been getting. She tells me. Well, I 'd always 'tended to me politics proper, and does a song and dance when asked to oblige at de club smokers, so of course I goes to me precinct captain and tells him. He goes to de district leader's lieutenant and tells him, and he

tells de district leader. De leader sends a tip to de Bureau of Incumbrances. De chief of de bureau tips a cop, who pinches de laundryman for obstructing de street at night wit his delivery wagon.

"De laundryman puts up a holler, goes to de leader, and says he has paid for de privilege of obstructing de street. De leader says dat don't give him no right to take wages away from de modder of a good precinct woiker. 'Leave old lady Fadden have her woik at de old price,' says de leader, 'or you pays ten dollars' fine for street obstructing, and has to hire a stable to put your wagon in,' he says.

"De laundryman," I says to Whiskers, "done what he was told, and me modder keeps her woik and wages. I 'd be a welcher if I did n't 'tend to me politics after dat. Would n't I?" I says.

"When dere is a President to be elected to Washington, Somebody tells de Boss who is to be sent to de convention. De Boss tells de leader, who tells his lieutenant, who tells

me precinct captain, who tells me, so I knows who to vote for at de primaries. Easy! Can I go now, Miss Fannie?'' I says.

''Unless papa wants to ask you some more about politics,'' she says, wit a smile.

''Tank you,'' says Whiskers, getting frosty. ''I has already heard more nonsense about politics dan I care for.''

''I have n't,'' says Mr. Paul. ''How many are dere in New York,'' he says to me, ''who are enrolled, as you are, for some favor received—or expected?''

''I don't know in all New York,'' I says, ''but on de little old island of Manhattan dere is about one hundred tousand of us on our side. I ain't dead next on de game now,'' I says, ''for I 've been out of it—except 'tending to me duty—since I come here. A mug,'' I says, ''has to keep next all de time to cop it right. I was in it for fair only five years, for I did n't vote till I was sixteen, and Miss Fannie hired me when I was twenty-one. To know de game wise takes twenty years' hard woik, doing

notting else. Can I go now, Miss Fannie?'' I says.

''Unless Paul wants to ask you someting about politics,'' says she, looking hard at her fancy-woik.

Mr. Paul taut awhile, den says, ''No. I did intend going out wit Mr. Van Courtlandt to-morrow afternoon, and settle dis matter according to right and reason,'' he says. ''But on second taut,'' says he, ''it would be cruel for us to destroy in a day de machine which saves so many excellent citizens de trouble of deciding for deirselves who to send to de conventions dat nominates a Pres—''

''Paul, drink up!'' says Whiskers. ''Chames,'' he says, ''get out!''

Say, I wonder what was troubling de old gentleman?

XII

WOMAN'S CUNNING

"I 'll tank you to learn him how to open it."

XII

WOMAN'S CUNNING

DAT Maccaroni is to de good. He 's wise. His game is n't a flimflam, for dere 's no use of wires in telegrafting. Maccaroni is to de good for fair; but he is n't de only trolley on de track. Let me tell you: Duchess is a wireless telegrafter. How do I know? To me loss. Dat 's right: to me grief! And I can tell a grafter when I see one. What!

Ever since Duchess has been më wife I has tried to sink a bean, a green wafer, in me own jeans witout her getting next. Nay, nay! If I win a tip from Whiskers, Mr. Paul, de Wily Widdy, or Mr. Burton—no, cut dat: Mr. Burton never parts from his simoleons in tips—or from anybody, Duchess is on. She 's wise, I tell you; she 's

next, she cops me graft, and it must be by wireless telegraft. I wish dere was a "central" I could ring up, and have her wireless wire connected wit somebody besides yours truly. Dat 's me only chance to hold out a dollar or so, to start a sinking-fun of me own.

But I don't want to pass out no hard-luck chant. I 've piped whole bunches of mugs in me time; wise guys and gillies; fly ducks and gazeaboos; but I never yet seen one make to de good by putting up a hard-luck holler. It 's as easy to make a front of being to de good, as to run a bluff of being to de bad, and it 's a better winning graft. As me old friend Mrs. Murphy says —and a door-knob is a soft-boiled egg alongside de luck she 's played in—she says:

> Rich, and de woild is wit you!
> Poor, and you 're poor alone!

I 'm wiser dan to sing a song of hard luck, wit me pocket full of pie; but I 'd be

tickled to deat if Duchess would catch loss of memory de next time I tries to hold out de price of a night off. I 'm not kicking, but me leg twitters when I tink of de size of de roll Duchess has in de saving-banks, and dat it 's all being saved for—No. I can't tell you dat. Not yet. I 'm not winking. Duchess is French, you know, and French folk is wonders for giving a solid send-off in de woild to—Dere I go again! I must n't peep. But, chee! I wish I could.

What was I telling you of? I 'm a bit gay in me coco dese days, and I forgets me line of talk.

I was over to Mr. Paul's, giving him his boxing-lesson, and I chances to say dat dere was no use screaming a hard-luck yarn, even if de yarn was on you; but he looks tautful awhile, and says, "He laughs at cars who never felt a bump," he says. "You, Chames, is de luckiest young poisson in de borough of Manhattan and de Bronx. You has a good home, in a good place, wit good frens."

"De best ever," I says.

"And," he says, "Hortense is a good wife."

"She is," I says, "and a good toucher."

"If I had your luck, Chames," he says, "I 'd be satisfied just to be let to stay on eart. As it is," he says, "I 'm de miserablest of mortals. But," he says, "if you will tell dat Oriental valet of mine—if you can find him—to tell me tired butler—if he can find him—to fetch a small bottle—if he can find it—I 'll tank you to learn him how to open it witout a popping dat reminds me of de day when, wit one odder poisson who shall be nameless, I charged up Sam Juan's Hill."

And dat 's no joke. He was to dat war, but he never peeps a woid about it, except to me. He says it will be his monument dat he charged dat Hill and never wrote a book on it.

But dose is n't de tings I was going to tell you of.

Hark: Wily Widdy has no town house,

so when she chases in from her country place to see a dressmaker, or de dentist, or go to de opray, or any odder trouble, she stops wit frens in town, and sometimes we get her.

"Papa," says Miss Fannie, "dear Mrs. Harding"—dat 's Widdy's name—"has n't a home of her own in de city, notting but a box at de opray. She 's coming in to push a bunch of new Paris gowns tru de Custom House, and I tink we should have de poor creature here wit us."

"Do so," says Whiskers. "Do so, me dear. And, by de way," he says, "you has n't ordered any new gowns from Paris yourself, lately," he says.

"We 're so poor dis winter," she says.

"To be sure," says Whiskers, going to his desk. "But if a extra check dis mont, for two tousand, will help conceal our poverty, here it is," he says, passing her out de check.

Duchess and me happens to hear dis, and afterwards she says to me, "If I had a rich

papa, and wanted a few tousand extra pin money, I could wish to be as conning as Miss Fannie is."

"What 's dat?" I says. "Dere is notting conning about Miss Fannie."

"Not conning—cunning," says Duchess.

"What is de answer?" I says.

"It is dis," says Duchess. "Miss Fannie is a very brave woman. She get extra allowance from her papa by inviting her own rival into de house."

"Away back!" I says. "To de woods! Is de Widdy Miss Fannie's rival for Whiskers?"

"Not Weeskairs," says Duchess. "Not Weeskairs, but M'sieu Paul."

"On your way!" I says.

Duchess laughs, and says: "I have much regard for Miss Fannie, dat she is fearless. She invite her rival into de house; also she will invite M'sieu Paul more dan usual while Madame Harding is here, for to keep M'sieu, her papa, safe from de charming widdy."

Say, would n't it take a French goil to pipe-dream a plot like dose? What? It 's as woise as I ever see out on top of de stoige. I tells Duchess so, but she only gives me de laugh and de shoulder shrug.

Well, Widdy floats in, per Miss Fannie's invite, and when I was unstrapping her trunk she says to Miss Fannie, "Don't let me meet a soul, me dear," she says. " I've notting but rags to wear; just a few old tings fit for de opray."

"Truly," says Miss Fannie, "one may no longer wear a decent gown to de opray witout being mistook for a member of de divorce-and-remarry set," she says. "Dere will be no one at dinner to-night but Paul."

"Oh, he don't count," says Widdy. "By de way, Fannie," she says, "how shall we divide our men for de opray to-night? Shall I take your fadder, or your husband, or Paul? Who do you want in your box?"

"Mr. Burton is out of town," says Miss Fannie. "But you 'll have to take in all de rest of us, including me."

"How lovely!" says Widdy. "Has you give your box to a poor relation?"

"No," says Miss Fannie. "It is a repeat night, so, before I knowed you was coming, I give me box to Hortense."

"Your maid?" says Widdy. "I spose she 'll give up de box witout giving notice of leaving. We 'd better divide up our men."

Den Miss Fannie smiles, and says someting to Widdy in forn langwudge. Widdy hists her eyebrows, says, "Indeed!" and looks at me like I 'd made a hit wit her. As dere was n't no more trunks to unstrap, I chases meself.

It took Widdy days and days to con de Custom House, but dere was someting doing, so dat she got no chance for a heart-to-heart chat wit Whiskers or Mr. Paul. But one morning Miss Fannie went out shopping wit Duchess to get—but not a woid of dat!—and she give me a note to Whiskers at his club. Just as I was waltzing pass Mr. Paul's club I pipes Widdy rolling

up de Avenoo in her little victoria, and she was furred like a Sam Bernard dog. Mr. Paul was looking out de club window, and him and Widdy give each odder de howdy hand-wave. Den Widdy sees me, stops her wagon by de curb, and motions me up.

"Me man," she says, "is n't dat Mr. Paul's club?"

"Sure, ma'am," I says.

"I was n't so sure," she says. "All clubs look alike to women," she says.

"It looks more like Mr. Paul's club dan anybody else's, when you nods to Mr. Paul in de window," I says.

Foist she give me de haughty stare. Den she laughs, and says, "I remember dat Fannie allows you great license in your speech," she says. "By de way, Chames," she says, "did I remember you on Christmas?"

"You forgot to remember, ma'am," I says.

"Here, den," she says, digging one of your Uncle Sammy's one-spot green wafers

out of her ridicule. "I wish," she says, "dat you 'd go to de club, and say to Mr. Paul dat dere 's a new tangle in me Custom House affair, and I need his advice. Say dat I would n't bodder him to come at once to Fannie's house to see me about it, except dat, unfortunately, Mr. Van Courtlandt and Fannie is bote out, so dere is nobody I can advise wit unless he comes. You understand, Chames, do you?" she says.

"Not quite right, all right," I says.

She pinches anodder wafer from her bunch, and passes it out to me.

"Now do you understand?" she says.

"Like a book, ma'am," says I.

She drives off home, and I goes to de club and gives me message to Mr. Paul. When I was tru he says, "Dis Custom House business is troublesome, Chames."

"It 's to de bad," I says.

"It must be conducted wit delicacy and —and secrecy."

"S-sh!" says I.

Well, he dug into his jeans, and he pun-

gles a green wafer, too—anodder one spot.

Say, as I waltzes on down to Whiskers's club I was dreaming dreams. I was tree wafers to de good, and Duchess not on!

I gives Whiskers Miss Fannie's note, and he says, "Is all me people away from home?"

"Mrs. Harding is to de house, sir," I says, "and in trouble again about de customs," I says.

"Dear me!" says Whiskers. "I 'll not be able to join Fannie at Del's for lunch," he says. "I must go home at once and help Mrs. Harding wit her affairs. It was tautful of you to mention dis to me, Chames," he says, and p'chee! he squeezes a one-spot wafer from his westcot, passes it out to me, and makes tracks for home.

Honest, I was feeling dat if I owned any more of de island I 'd be land poor. I floats down de Avenoo, to see which way de tide was running, and I plumps into Miss Fannie and Duchess, going from a shop to de

carriage. Miss Fannie asks me did I give her note to her fadder, and I says I did. Den she says was he going to meet her at Del's?

"I tink not, Miss Fannie," I says. "I tink he will lunch at home."

"But dere is no one at home," she says.

"Mrs. Harding is dere," I says.

Miss Fannie was jolted only half a second. Den she came up smiling, and she says: "I 'm afraid dey 'll starve to deat witout me, for I left no order for lunch. Home!" she says to coachy.

When I gets home Duchess comes to me and says: "Master Cheemes, Miss Fannie says you were a very good boy to give her a hint. She is so particular about her lunches. She give me dis for you."

Duchess flashed anodder one-spot wafer, and by dat time I 'd seen so many I was near blinded.

"I 'll keep it for you," Duchess says, "and, *mon ami*, if you please, I will take

de odder tips you has got dis lovely morning."

"Hully chee!" I says. "How do you know I has any?"

"Because," says Duchess, "when Miss Fannie come in, and say sweetly to Madame Harding and de gents, 'I am so glad I happen home to keep you from starving,' dey all looks so *imbécile*, I know dere has been mischief. You helps in no mischief witout tips."

Say, dere is no use kicking at hard luck, but what do you tink of dat? I win four races, straight, and den gets touched by Duchess, who had n't even been to de race-track!

XIII

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK

"And had to chase dere and square tings wit de chief."

XIII

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK

I WAS out in de stables learning de coachman's boy to dance jig steps. He 's a good boy, only he has two left feet, and I could learn Little Miss Fannie's doll to dance easier nor him. But his dad wants de kid learned all de fashionable stunts, so I does me best; for, next to de cook and housekeeper, nobody is so useful to be chummy wit as Coachy. Well, I was trying a jig what could be danced wit de left feet, when Miss Fannie sends for me. I goes to de library, and Mr. Paul was dere, and Whiskers. Miss Fannie says to me, "Chames," she says, "Paul wants to borrow you for a few days."

"It is to go on a wedding joiney," says Mr. Paul.

"Is it your own wedding, sir?" I says, wondering what was doing.

"No," says he. "If it was, I could get along wit me own Oriental valet. It is a Virginia wedding, so I must take you to do diplomatic woik, and me Chap valet for de common or garden variety of duty."

I never was to Virginia, so when I waltzes over to Mr. Paul to get him ready to start, I asks what kind of place was dis we was going to.

"Virginia," he says, "is a State of joy, and of de Union," he says. "It produces large and rich crops of tobacco, hunt clubs, and hospitality. We will be dere two days, but wit your help I tink I can get out alive wit eighteen trunks."

"Is we to open a trunk store, sir?" I says.

"I may open," he says, "a few jack-pots, but notting woise. De trunks is needed to save me life. What close I wants to wear, put in a suit-case."

I had to let it go at dat, for when Mr.

Paul tries he can say as many woids dat don't mean notting as a orator. So Chap and me gets busy and packs. We grabs all de close in de house: winter close, summer close, city, country, yachting, hunting, golf, and any old line of close we struck, and we packs and packs till we sends off a wagon-load. Den Mr. Paul tells Chap to take de suit-case, me to get tickets, and we was off.

Honest, I was near croisy wit wondering what was de game, but says notting till we gets to de depot in Virginia, when I asks what was I to do wit de trunks.

"Notting yet," he says. "Take de suit-case, quick, and perhaps we can make a rush to de hotel."

We did n't. Just as we was butting into a carriage a gent makes a dive for Mr. Paul.

"Me dear old chap," he says, "you got me letter?"

"So good of you," says Mr. Paul, rubbering like he was a bit noivous.

"Your room is all ready," says de gent.

"Send your trunk right to me house," he says.

"Chames," says Mr. Paul, "send me trunk to dis gent's house."

"Which one?" says I.

"He has but one house," says Mr. Paul, looking at me hard.

I was n't quite on, but touches me hat, and sends a trunk where he tells me.

"I 'm off to business now," says de gent, "but I 'll see you at de club later."

"Sure," says Mr. Paul, and de gent was on his way.

"Send me Chapanese to de hotel wit me suit-case," says Mr. Paul. "It 's de best we can do now. Here comes anodder fren."

De next fren waltzes up, gives Mr. Paul a double hand-shake, and says, "So glad you got me letter, old chap. Send your trunk right to me house."

"So good of you," says Mr. Paul, passing a troubled eye up de street. "Chames," he says, "you was just going to send me trunk to dis gent's house."

"In a minute," I says, digging anodder trunk check out of me jeans.

"We hunt to-day," says de gent. "I 'll have a mount for you at de meet. Now I 'm off to look over me mail. Pick you up at de club later."

"All right, old chap," says Mr. Paul, and de second gent was on his way.

"Now, Chames," says Mr. Paul, "if I 'm seen at de hotel bote dose gents will challenge me. Let us go to de club, and do de best we can. De club manager will let you stop in de hall. Keep a smart eye open, and when you see a new fren headed for me, cut me loose from any bunch of gents I 'm wit, so as I 'll be sure to meet each fren alone. In dat way I may escape a duel."

Say, we only gets to de club steps when a toid fren cops Mr. Paul, and tells him on his life to send his trunk to his house. Mr. Paul says sure, dey chins a little, den de gent says, "I 'm on me way to business now, but some of de youngsters inside will look out for you till I get back."

I woiks de telephone, gets off de toid trunk, den hears anodder gent ask de doorman where was Mr. Paul. I tips de wink to Mr. Paul, he meets de gent in de hall, and dey goes tru de game of talk as per usual. When dey was done, Mr. Paul passes me out a bunch of five cards, and tells me to hustle off trunks to all deir addresses.

Well, by de time de foist gents and odders begun chasing in for lunch, I 'd woiked off de whole eighteen trunks. Den de baggagemaster sends woid to de police dat a croisy man at de club was scattering dude baggage all over de county, and ought to be attended to. So I gets a hurry call from Headquarters, and had to chase dere and square tings wit de chief. He says Mr. Paul was taking big chances, but he 'd call out de resoives for him in case of riot. When I gets back to de club I says to Mr. Paul, "Scuse me," I says, "but which of dose eighteen houses is you going to sleep in, so I 'll know where to send your suitcase?"

"Sleep, Chames?" he says, mopping his for'd. "You has yet to learn de customs of de country."

Listen. I 'm giving it to you straight. Before lunch Mr. Paul promised to go to a dozen hunts, about twenty country clubs, a bunch of golf clubs, and a few plain every-day city clubs. But nobody made a start to go nowhere. All hands was happy spinning yarns and—well, I tell no tales out of school, but a coon waiter dere has learned my trick of pulling out de plugs. I got a few winks of sleep in a quiet corner where de hall boys was, but Mr. Paul sat in wit his frens like he 'd been a Virginian since deir governors wore wigs and knee pants. De next morning, about sun-up, when de last fren was on his way home, we makes a quiet sneak to de hotel. Mr. Paul gets a bat', shave, and breakfast, dresses for de early wedding, and I tags along to watch his frens go into de choich. Say, de gents had all been to deir offices, but dey all comes up smiling for de wedding, looking like

dey 'd trained for a year to see how fresh dey could look on dat day. Dey is wonders for fair. Mr. Paul says it 's because dey rides so much. Maybe dey has a short saddle track in de club basement. I don't know.

After de wedding Mr. Paul hikes around making afternoon calls on de eighteen houses where his trunks was at. Each place he tells de missus dat he 'd send me for his trunk, for he was leaving in de evening. He says what a lovely time he 'd had at deir houses, and dey says how pleased dey was to have him dere—never cracking a smile. Dey is torrowbreds.

When we gets back home, Whiskers asks Mr. Paul what kind of a time did he have in Virginia.

"Nice quiet time," says Mr. Paul. "When I feels de need of poifect rest, I goes to Virginia for a few days."

"I understand," says Whiskers, "dat de foist families keeps up de good old colonial manner of life—early dinners, early to bed, and dat sort of ting."

"Curfew rings at eight o'clock in Virginia," says Mr. Paul. "Any one caught out of bed after dat colonial hour is sent to jail."

Miss Fannie looks hard at Mr. Paul, den she smiles to herself, and says to her dad, "Paul looks like he 'd slept all de time he was in Virginia. Should you not offer him a glass of wine to wake him up?"

"Soitainly," says Whiskers. "Chames, a bottle."

"I 'll not trouble you," says Mr. Paul. "A few days in Virginia makes me a cold-water man for weeks afterward. One quickly gets out of de habit of taking anyting but spring water, down dere."

"Any particular spring?" asks Miss Fannie.

"I remember one," he says. "It is called High Bald Mountain Spring."

"Since you has been away it has been radder dry here, too," says Whiskers.

"What 's de matter?" says Mr. Paul. "Been discussing de Cuban question?"

"I do not allow dat question to be mentioned in me presence," says Whiskers.

"Dat 's de way to settle it," says Mr. Paul. "Make it treason to mention it."

"It should be," says Whiskers. "Dose wicked agitators should be hanged each time dey speaks. Is de widdies and orphans who makes beet-sugar machinery to have deir bread snatched from deir mouts? De bullying Boloman must give up de bullet before he asks for de ballot."

"Right!" says Mr. Paul. "Down wit Lexington and Concord!"

"Is de tangled Tagalog, fighting for freedom, to be rewarded wit de franchise? Dat would be an invitation to all our colonies to ask de same rights."

"If dey asks for liberty or deat, let us be generous and give 'em bote," says Mr. Paul. "I see, sir," he says, "dat you has grasped de very bull's-eye of dis matter, and sifted it to a crystal point where it stands upon its own bottom, asking no cards, but wit lance at rest scorning de gilder's

art to prove de sweetness of its bouquet. Let Cubans engage in some honester business dan raising cane. As for de Philippines, did n't we get de decision? Do dey not know when dey are down and out? Must we send 'em a Beveridge to count ten at 'em? No! War is what General Sherman said it was—but not a Beveridge!"

"Me dear Paul," says Whiskers, "I am charmed to hear you talk so sensibly. It may be de result of your spring-water experience in Virginia."

"Maybe," says Mr. Paul. "Mrs. Burton," he says to Miss Fannie, "may we not have some tea?"

XIV

THE HOUSE PARTY

" Dey was n't saying a woid."

XIV

THE HOUSE PARTY

NOW, all de swells like our folks won't have no homes in little old New York, pretty soon; only bedrooms, and dressing-rooms, to use when someting important, like de opray or de dog show, fetches 'em in town. I used to get a chance in winter for a stroll down de line wit me old gang, or to show de style of Duchess at a ball of de Roseleaf Social Outing and Life-saving Club. Now de winter is as woise as de summer—it 's country all de time.

I 'll soon be a farmer for fair: Duchess will be churning cheese and picking jam, while I 'm tapping de grape-vine for wine, and husking hops for beer.

Nowdays we no sooner gets de town house aired, warmed up, and running easy, dan

we chases back to de tall grass to give a house party or go to one. I 'd radder give dan go, for de home soivants collars all de tips, and visiting soivants gets notting but extra woik—and a jolly. Except Duchess. If ever she ran over a man on her bike she 'd land a tip from him while he was waiting for de ambulance doctor.

Well, de odder day Miss Fannie tells me and Duchess to get her and Mr. Burton ready to go to a house party, what was give by some mugs in a country house near as big as Madison Square's Garden. Dey has a lake, too. Dere was skating on de lake in de day, and in de billiard-room at night.

Listen: I asks Mr. Paul was he going; for when he chases along wit our folks, which he mostly does, I looks after his tickets and trunks, his valet being a Chap from Chapan, who ain't wise on American ways. Once he landed Mr. Paul and his trunks in Boston to keep a dinner engagement in Baltimore.

"Yes, Chames," says Mr. Paul, "I shall

'tend dis house party as a penance for me sins," he says. "Man," he says, "not to mention lovely woman, being a fool of great specific gravity, builds comfortable homes where he can live in quiet and reclusion, and den shuts 'em up, or else fills 'em wit odder fools to destroy his quiet, and put him in training for de hereafter—if de woise comes to de woist.

"We boast, Chames, of our mental sauces, but all de same," he says, "dere are but few of us able to entertain ourselves if trun upon our own sauces of recreation. When we buys an Old Master, or hires a great *chef*, or learns to play de banjo, or do any of de odder highly intellectual stunts dat distinguishes us from flat or cave dwellers, we pretends it is all for our own improvement. Nay, nay!" he says. "Not a bit like it. We gets our dividends on such investments only when our friends praise our table, our picture, or our rag-time.

"Derefore," he says, "let us gadder at de house party; not to be entertained by

our friend's accomplishments, but to do an act of charity: to justify him in his own eyes for de boodle he has charred, buying tings he enjoys only when he shows 'em off."

"We is going to de dogs," I says, chipping in for luck.

"Not so," says Mr. Paul. "We is going away from 'em. Dogs is honest gentlemen, noted for deir preference for old-fashioned ways, love of home, and aversion from kennel parties. We is going away from de dogs, Chames.

"If you will give my valet a point or two, so he will not land me in Oshkosh, and me trunks in Cohoes, I 'll try," he says, "to reach de house party before de cellar runs dry."

But Duchess has a glad eye for house parties. She can do fancy stunts wit loidies' hair deir own maids can't do, and she nails more tips dan de home soivants do. Dat 's de reason when we got to de house party I seen no more of her dan she did de back of

her own neck. But I had de time of me life wit a housemaid dere I used to skate wit in Central Park.

Was I a skater when I was a kid? Say, I used to cut figures all around Champeen Willie Gibson in dose days. Dat goes if he hears it.

Well, me goil fren had n't enough to do to keep her awake after sundown till I says to her, "Molly," I says, "have a skate wit me dis evening," I says, "for old rocks' sake."

"You 're booked, Chimmie," she says. "When de folks is all busy wit bridge or ping-pong, we 'll do an old-time toin, just to show de man in de moon dere is some of us left," she says.

Molly ain't no dairymaid herself.

Say, a lot of odder couples was in de same alley. Dere was about a dozen of 'em what taut everybody else would be up to deir ears in bridge, and so not miss a couple who 'd sneaked out for a skate. But de odder couples was folks, not soivants.

Molly and me was sliding over de ice, doing de inside and de outside coive, and chin-chinning of old times, when we makes out dat here and dere, where de moon trun shadows of trees over de lake, dose odder couples was doing a quiet toin of skate by deir lonesomes.

"We 'd better chase ourselves," I says. "Dese is folks, and if dey cops who we is dey will send us dancing jigs to mile-stones. On our way!" I says.

"Tut, Chimmie," she says. "You has de rattles. Don't you tumble dat none of 'em wants to be seen? We is de only ones what is n't shy of de moonlight." Was I telling you she was n't born far from de Bowery?

"Well," I says, "dere is some air-holes in dose shady places dat will make a fine cold-water plunge for somebody in about a minute."

Say, I called de toin, dat time.

De couples was skating easy, like, and talking in whispers, and Molly and me

was n't keeping de snowboids awake, neider, when all of a suddent dere was a crash, a woman's squeal, and some langwudge by a man. I knowed what had happened and started for de trouble, but Molly giggled, and says, "Keep your seat, Chimmie. We has a right to see de next act. De water is n't deep enough to drown 'em."

What do you tink? Not a one of de odder couples lent a hand. Instead, dere was a hustling away from de trouble.

"Dose folks has n't been introduced," says Molly.

Just den de folks taking de cold sponge made a louder yell, and, chee! I knowed deir voices—Whiskers and Wily Widdy!

"Hustle!" I says to Molly. "It 's up to us to do de life-saving act."

Well, we slides over to de hole, and fishes out Whiskers and Widdy. Dey was n't saying a woid. We truns our coats over 'em, yanks off deir skates, sneaks 'em into de house by a side door, and gets 'em to deir rooms wit no one de wiser.

I goes in wit Whiskers, rubs half de skin off him, fetches him someting hot, and puts him into evening close. He never peeped till he was ready to go down-stairs. Den he says, passing me out a five, "Chames, you mitigated scamp," he says, "you has just waked me from me after-dinner nap, has n't you?"

"Sure," I says.

An hour after dat I was helping de house-soivants give de bridgers someting to keep 'em from starving, and I sees Whiskers and Widdy holding cards, and looking like dey could n't tell a pair of skates from a pair of jacks.

Say, all de good actors is n't in de tee-aters.

Molly told me dat Widdy pungled a five, and I taut de game was all over, and not a bad one at dat.

But listen: de next day I heard Miss Fannie say to Widdy, "I 'm so distressed, me dear, dat you has such a dreadful cold."

"It 's only a slight one," says Widdy,

"I took in de billiard-room when de window was opened by some one," she says, "who overlooked de fact dat me waist was composed of only a belt and two shoulder-straps."

"How stupid of him," says Miss Fannie, "to overlook such a matter!"

And de looks dey gave put me on dat Miss Fannie knew, and Widdy knew she knew.

Den I hears Mr. Paul say to Whiskers, "Let me recommend, sir, me pet cold cure. It is one pint hot rum, half a pint honey, six cloves, de juice of one lemon, and—"

"Why me?" says Whiskers, but he had a voice on him like a hobo who 'd slept under a wharf for a year.

"You could use it," says Mr. Paul, "in case of emergency."

"I 'll cross dat bridge when I comes to it," says Whiskers.

"Let us hope de bridge will be strong enough for two," says Mr. Paul, and bote grinned, but says notting.

I chases to Molly and asks her what kind of a silly she was to go and tell de yarn of de cold plunge. She swore she never give it away, and I was going to ask her how, den, did Miss Fannie and Mr. Paul know. But I taut again, and did n't ask.

Say, I was shaking hands wit meself 'cause Duchess was n't wise on de strike I 'd made. But what 's de use? When she begins to rubber you may as well lay down your hand.

"Chames," she says, "you has been too good to be true lately. You was missing from de house one evening, and so was dat Bowery cat, Molly, and so was Mr. Van Courtlandt and Widdy. Last night you was teaching Mr. Paul's Chapanese valet to play poker, and you showed a five-dollar bill. I heard of it. You got it in some mischief, and all dese colds floating about has to do wit it. Give me de five and look cheerful, Chames," she says. "Yield de five to me, or I 'll tell Mr. Van Courtlandt dat you told me."

"But I has n't told you," I says.

"So you has someting to tell, eh, *mon ami?* Yield, Chames, for if I tell Whiskers you has told, he 'll take a strap to you."

On de level, a Bowery boy is right in it, except when he tries to flimflam a French maid!

I yielded.

XV

AT THE ROSELEAF BALL

The Roseleaf Ball.

XV

AT THE ROSELEAF BALL

A FEW days ago Mr. Paul was to our house waiting for de folks to come home from a drive, and he sends Perkins, de butler, for me. Dat makes Perky croisy, for I cops de tips. Mr. Paul was looking like he had no fren on eart but a yeller dog, and had lost de dog.

"Chames," he says, "if Mr. Van Courtlandt's cellar has not suspended payment I shall ask you to cash my draft dereon for one small bottle. Me mental vision," he says, "is o'ercast by a poiple cloud, which may be dissipated by de laughter of de peasant goils of France—which de same is de sound of bubbles bursting in a glass," he says.

He talks like a actor out on top of de stoige, sometimes.

I fetches de bot, and Mr. Paul looks tru a glass wit one eye, like he was rubbering to see de laughing goils. Den he says:

"As a fren of mine once obsoived, 'de times is out of joint.' I 'll not mention me fren's name, for he is not popular in our set, and if I was known to know him," he says, "I would lose de esteem of polite society.

"New York," he says, "is no longer a community; it is a Union Railway station. 'Hotels to de right of you; teeaters to de left of you; stock-tickers in front of you, loidies and gents! Twenty minutes for refreshments, amusements, and business! Step lively, please! Bote gates! All aboard!'

"Dat 's New York, Chames."

"Sure," I says. "It has two left feet."

"It has notting dat is natural," he says. "De social graces are as dead as Queen Anne, and more forgot. To be able to converse is to invite suspicion of caring for books, music, painting. Deadly!" he says.

"Private entertainment is a lost art, remembered only to be hissed. A loidy, now, shudders at de task of taking care of a dinner party, after de dinner, witout de aid of some noxious little tenor, a rag-time pest, or a English monologist. A stag dinner witout de artful help of a poisson in skirts who can—and does—kick de hat off de tallest guest, would be hooted," he says.

"Police!" says I.

"Dere is now no use," he says, "for old-fashioned mugs like me, brung up in de idea dat New York had a society wort cultivating for its own sake, not for de sake of invitations to country places, golf clubs, polo grounds, hunt meets, house parties, yacht cruises, or summer cottages. New York is now a social clearing-house, whose banks all do business out of town," he says.

Sometimes Mr. Paul talks like a piece in de poiper; and if I pulls de plug from anodder pint he gets woise. So I pulls de plug, and he goes on wit his stunt.

"Consider me own case, Chames," he says. "I 'm still able to ride 'cross country, if de fences are not over five feet; I walks to de polls every election; I can read fine print witout de aid of glasses—except historical novels, den I needs a glass or two —has never had de doctor or de spepsia, yet I 'm a has-been. In me younger days honest folks was content always to live in deir own houses; good people gave dancing parties in town, and were not ashamed of it; hostesses could get husky men to dance wit deir goils witout de aid of knock-out drops. How is it now?" says he.

"On de bum," says I.

"Now," says he, "we live anywhere but at home; give dancing parties for schoolgoils only; and a young man passed eighteen would die of appleplexic chagrin"—is dose woids willy-wonders? What?—"if asked to dance except at a hunt ball, a barn party, a bubble dinner, a golf tea, or someting besides a plain, old-fashioned dancing party. I 'm de only plain dancing party

dere is left. Was dat Miss Fannie what just came in?''

''No,'' I says, taking a peep into de hall. ''It was Duchess, who was out getting masks for me and her to wear to de *bal maskay* of de Roseleaf Social Outing and Life-saving Club.''

''Dat 's a winsome name,'' he says. ''Where do you give your ball?''

I told him de ball was give in de hall over de restaurant kept by de goil fren of Duchess and her hubby, de *chef* what I was telling you of. Mr. Paul taut awhile, den he says, ''Chames, I shall go to your ball wit a loidy who has de wit to 'preciate de situation and act according.''

Listen: dat knocked me. I tumbled in a minute dat de loidy he meant was Wily Widdy, for she 's in town again, but not to our house, and she is de one Mr. Paul travels wit on larks like dis. I was leery of trouble of me own if she went, but I could n't tell Mr. Paul de reason, so I just says, ''On your way, sir!'' I says. ''Folks

don't go to our ball; only loidies' maids, valets, butlers, barkeeps and deir steadies, and de likes of such."

He seen I was up against it, so he says, "I has no intention to go to your ball *in propria persona*," which was his very langwudge.

"You 'll go in a mask, sir, if you go at all, for dere is no *impropria personas* let in. But about de loidy?" I says, for I was dead leery of her.

"Oh," he says, "we shall presoive our incogniter."

"You can check your incogniter wit your hats," I says.

Den de folks come home, and I chases. Say, I was croisy, for fair. It was dis way: Whiskers had give me a tip, on de quiet, for a couple of tickets to de ball for him and a sporty old boy from Boston what was in town. I know me business, and I knew dat dere would be someting doing, but notting in it for me, if Whiskers saw Widdy at de ball wit Mr. Paul. Duchess might put

me wise how to get out of de trouble, but if I told her Whiskers was going I 'd have to yield up de tip he give me. So I only tells her Mr. Paul was going, and she laughs and says, "In a minute."

I asks her about dis "incogniter" Mr. Paul was telling of, and she says it was a college woid what meant "dignity."

"All right, den," I says. "Mr. Paul would presoive his dignity if a goat was chasing him while he was chasing his own hat."

Well, de fat and de lean of it is dis: Just as me and Duchess was starting de grand march at de ball, I seen Mr. Paul and a loidy come in and go to a little table at one end of de hall, and sit down, all on de dead quiet.

"Who 's de loidy?" I asks Duchess, to make sure.

"Wily Widdy," she says. "I 'd know her shape if she was dressed in a flour-sack. Anyway, dat 's de same lace mask and domino I 've seen her in before."

"All right," I says. "Let her go, Mrs. Gallagher. I hopes notting explodes."

Say, de Roseleafers is de best bunch of dancers what ever came down Main Street, and some of de goils is strawberries at high kicking. I ain't so woise at de game meself. Well, Duchess and me, de *chef* and his wife, me fren de barkeep and his steady, and Maggie de housemaid and her steady was doing a French quadrille, and you never seen one out on top of de stoige dat would n't look like toity cents by de side of ours.

I seen dat Mr. Paul and Widdy was having de time of deir life, piping de game, and I was hoping dat Whiskers and his sporty fren from Boston was lost in de Tenderloin, when I near drops dead. A couple of gazeaboos, who 'd been watching de dance, yells "Bravo!" when we was done, and I knowed it was dose two geezers!

Duchess heard, too, and she gives me a look, and says, "*Mon Dieu!* if M'sieu Van Courtlandt recognize de Widdy, M'sieu

Paul will have to stop calling at our house, for sure!" she says.

"Go chase him away," I says.

"I cannot!" she says, and she was in de foist scare I ever seen her have. "He seen de quadrille, and he may tink it was too lively for his daughter's maid to dance. How could he got here?" she says.

"I wonder?" says I.

I knowed Mr. Paul was de only hope, so I goes to him and tells him de lay-out. Honest, Mr. Paul looks a bit woozy, too.

"Dere is reasons, Chames," he says, "why I 'd somewhat radder have de small-pox dan have Mr. Van Courtlandt—under de soicumstances."

Say, I knowed dat was right, all right. I knowed it righter dan he did. But I had to give him a jolt to make him get action, so I says—pretending not to know who she was—"Could n't your loidy fren steer him away?"

"Steer who?" says Widdy.

"Whiskers," I says.

She yelled murder, and I seen her face get red tru de black lace.

Maggie de housemaid comes running up, not knowing who I was talking wit, and she says, "For de love of heaven, Chimmie, get rid of Whiskers if you has to bounce him!"

Den Duchess sails up, and she says dere will soon be a riot if Whiskers' sporty fren don't stop getting gay. "M'sieu Van Courtlandt," she says, "tinks de quadrille was danced by professionals, and he is hunting for you to order it done again. If he knows you and me and Maggie was in dat set we all gets discharged!"

"Hully chee!" I says. "We is up against it."

"We is!" says Widdy, wit a gasp.

Mr. Paul was shaking wit laughing, and he says, "Dis is a case where we can't move Mike Homet, so we must move de mountain. Hortense," he says, "you go home wit dis loidy in my carriage. Chames, you take Maggie home. I 'll take de small-pox," he says.

We four chases.

De next day I seen Mr. Paul, and after he taut a long time, he says, "Chames, in de course of some artistic lying done by me and Mr. Van Courtlandt, explaining our presence at de ball, I learned de trut—dat he got his ticket from you. Was dat why you did n't want me to go?"

"Not you," I says—"de loidy."

"Why de loidy?" he says.

"Because," I says, "when I give Whiskers de tickets, he give me a message to Mrs. Harding dat he could n't dine wit her last evening because he had to go to a meeting of de Reform Club."

Listen: Mr. Paul did n't say a woid; but he looked like he wanted to say a woid—one woid.

XVI

EXCISE AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

"Get busy," he says, "or I 'll chop your head off."

XVI

EXCISE AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

"WHAT," says Whiskers—"what is we to do about de excise law?"

"I has give de subject much taut," says Mr. Paul, "and derefore cannot break into de newspoipers wit me views on it. In private I may explain dat de question dissolves itself under tree heads: foist, what rights has Americans to say how New York shall be ruled; second," he says, "what is de forner here for if not to have his own way; toid, and lastly, what has de honest copper done dat we shall deprive him of a chance to make an honest million out of blackmail?"

"But what is de law?" asks Miss Fannie.

"Me dear Mrs. Burton," says Mr. Paul, "de law is a poor ting, but our own. It ex-

presses de American sense dat de citizen should be able to get as drunk as is good for him—and his wife and children—in six days of de week. De Sunday-closing law is a sample of Yankee meanness, designed to compel de breadwinner to consider de family bread before de family entrance.

"It is our national trait," he says, "to consider our own rights above dose of de stranger witin our gates. We is narrow-minded: we tinks de Sunday soivice of de meeting-house supplies a better standard of life dan de secret lodge of de Mafia, de sermons of Madam Emma Goldmann, or de edicts of de Clan de Gall."

"Tut, tut!" says Whiskers. "De law cannot be enforced; and if it is enforced de wicked Democrats will get back into office."

"But," says Miss Fannie, "what papa says is so confusing. Which do you claim," she says to him, "dat de law cannot, or should not, be enforced?"

"Really, me dear," says Whiskers, "your

question is—dat is, it is n't—I mean it has n't—''

''It has n't sense,'' chips in Mr. Paul, looking solemn at Miss Fannie.

''Why?'' she says, wit a laugh.

''Because,'' he says, ''some of us believe de law can't be enforced, some dat it should n't be; but we all believe it should n't *and* could n't. When you ask which we believe, it is as if you asked, 'Why is a house when it 's brick?' Dere is no answer; and to ask a question what can't be answered is merely feminine.''

''Dat 's it exactly,'' says Whiskers. ''You is feminine, Fannie.''

''Besides,'' says Mr. Paul, ''de saloon is de forn woiking-man's club—also his black-jack and his knock-out. De rights of de forner must be sacredly protected; even if de native American be trun out of house, home, and office. What is Sunday witout free beer? Rah!'' he says, ''for license, liquor, and loose morals. Down wit de meddling Yankee! De empty cupboard wit a

Sunday drunk is better dan a sober Sunday and a State Boss who don't know where he 's at.

"Let us," he says, "be liberal; let us be tolerant; let us all join in singing dat new Hymn of Freedom: 'Beer, Bossism, and Blackmail.' "

I don't believe Mr. Paul meant all he said. Sometimes he don't. I seen where a geezer wrote dat de cops could n't close de saloons if dey tried. I wonder how he found it out? Dey never tried. Roosevelt, you say? Why, he was only one of four. He could n't give de order to close for fair, 'cause de Inspectors and Captains knowed he could n't break 'em if dey faked it. It 's different dese days. If de order went out now, and on de level, just exactly one Sunday would see de finish—would do de trick. Every one dat knows de game knows dat. It 's wort more dan two millions in long green wafers a year for dat order not to go out. But dat has n't anyting to do wit it. Sure not.

I hears our folks chinning about tings dat sets wheels going in me coco, and if I don't let de wheels buzz dey 'll bust. Not anodder woid about it but dis: If I was a Reformer and de people says, "He 's a good one; we 'll give him a chance to reform tings," do you know what I would tink was up to me to do? Why, reform.

I says dat to Mr. Paul, and he says, "Your plan, Chames," he says, "is right morals, but wrong politics. A Reformer," he says, "is a man who is for morals when he 's out of office, but for politics when he 's in. Dat 's why he 's more frequent out dan in."

But I was going to tell you about me troubles. So long! I 'm off for France wit Duchess. America is to de bad, for fair, since Prince Henry and his little German band is going to butt into dis country, and get de glad hand from de Battery to de Bronx. Duchess won't stand for it.

"What 's de matter wit Henry?" I says, when she sets up her holler.

"*Revanche!*" she says. "Alsace!" she says, "and Lorraine!"

I knows none of dose parties, so I says notting, and she goes on.

"I 'd radder," she says, "see dis ridiculous country give fêtes to de oafs *Anglais* dan to de German pigs."

"What 's de answer?" I says.

"Is it dat you know not de history of your own country?" says she.

"Like a book," I says. "George Washington discovered it, Teddy Roosevelt saved it, Andy Carnegie learned it to read and write, and John L. Sullivan win de belt," I says.

"Germany insult Dewey," she says.

"Not Uncle George," I says, "or dere would n't be no Germany. Guess again."

"When you was wit Spain at war," she says, "Germany wanted to come over and capture New York, like she did Paris, but England stopped her."

"Dat was good of dear old Lunnon," says I.

"American pork, and insurance companies is kept out of Germany," she says.

"Dey is bote good tings," I says, "and we can't keep too much of 'em at home."

"You has no love for *la patrie*," she says. "*Revanche!*" Den she made faces, and would n't speak to me no more.

I goes to Mr. Paul, asks him what was doing, and tells him what Duchess says.

Mr. Paul taut awhile, den he says: "Chames, you has come to headquarters dis time. I am probably de only living human gent what understands dis whole bunch of trouble; and dat is because I has devoted a long and studious life to getting next to de game."

Sometimes Mr. Paul talks as straight English as me.

"De game," he says, "is called international politics, which is de science of not tackling a nation bigger dan you is, unless you has a gang back of you to offset de handicap. A big part of de game is to get chummy wit any nation you can't lick alone,

if you can't get a gang to help you lick it."

"Is dere a scrap coming?" I asks.

"Very likely," he says. "I has read all de historical novels of de last year, except a few hundred dat could n't be printed fast enough for me to get a copy, and I learns from dem dat de glad hand is a sure sign of war.

"Your good wife Hortense," he says, "being of a French disposition, is naturally distressed dat we should be preparing terrapin and canvasback for to give proper welcome to a gent of German substraction. De country of Hortense," he says, "once swung an upper-cut at de country of Prince Henry; but de enemy side-stepped, and la belle France's blow landed on her own astonished nose. While she was busy washing de self-drawn gore off her own face, Germany waltzes in and took tea on de Chanze Allezay."

"Germany was give de decision?" I asks.

"She took it," he says. "Den, being trained for a real fight, Germany looks

about to see who could she get into de ring wit next, and earn a reputation in de heavy-weight class. De eye of her War Lord lit upon England, and he says, 'Here 's a scrapper in me own class.' He makes a face at England, and got de sprise of his life. When he opens his eyes after making de face he seen England fenced in on all sides wit two lines of war-ships: dere was just four of 'em for every one he had. So he says he has an engagement to perform in vaudeville for a season, and could n't get into de ring witout breaking a contract wit his press-agent. Den he sends out a hurry order for two gross of war-ships.

"In de meantime, under Providence, and de blessing of community of interest, dis country, de U. S. A., had fought tru de middle-weight class, and had come up smiling and looking for trouble. Now, Chames, under de rules of international politics, any one not wit you is again you."

"Same in ward politics," I says, beginning to get on to de game.

"Very well," he says. "Seeing dat we

knows how to put up our fists, King Edward and King William bote gets a move on. King Edward moves foist: he passes us out a monopoly in cigarettes and underground railways.''

''Good woik!'' I says.

''Fine woik,'' says Mr. Paul. ''Den King William says to his High Lord Jollier, 'Get busy,' he says, 'or I 'll chop your head off. How,' he says, 'shall I give de double-cross to Uncle Ned?' meaning King Edward.

'' 'Send America a Prince, your Majesty,' says de High Lord Jollier, who is no farmer. 'But,' says Willie, 'me uncle has give 'em a monopoly.'

'' 'Your Gracious Majesty,' says de Jollier, 'Americans is a proud and haughty race, who is high-steppers when it comes to independence. What cares dey for monopolies? Dat is a mere bauble, dross and vanity. What deir stern souls loves is a live Prince. De livelier de better.'

'' 'In dat case,' says de King, 'I 'll send Henry.'

"'Send Henry,' says de Jollier, 'and de game is a cinch. Give 'em a royal Prince, and den call on 'em for deir lives, liberties, and pursuit of happiness, and dey is yours to command.'

"'I 'll do it,' says de King, 'and den I 'll make anodder face at England.'

"So you see, Chames," says Mr. Paul, "dat de lamentations of Hortense is de woids of foolishness. De die is cast; we has set our hands to de plow, de sword is drawn, and de Committee of One Hundred is deep in de study of court etiquette, bills of fare, wine lists, and time-tables. De flanneled fools is smashing de wickets of vanity; de muddied oafs is kicking de foot-ball of rage and despair; but little Willie is keeping a dozen typewriters busy accepting invitations for Brodder Henry to visit de principal cities of dis country and Oshkosh.

"I only regrets dat I did not go long on a few tousand barrels of sauerkraut.

"Convey," he says—"convey to Hortense my *vive sympathie républicaine.*"

XVII

A CHRISTMAS PLAY

"Who 'll do me part?" I says.

XVII

A CHRISTMAS PLAY

"EVEN before I has fully recovered," says Mr. Paul, "from de weariness of spirit produced," he says, "by de Horse Show boxes, I has to contemplate de equal vanity of Christmas boxes."

"Nonsense!" says Miss Fannie.

"Woise dan nonsense," says Mr. Paul; "it 's unjustable extravagance," he says. "I finds in one stocking a match-box I don't want, and in de odder a cigarette-box I has no use for. Derein," he says, "dey is like de Horse Show boxes; except," he says, "dey is more costly; for I sends up peens of praise if I lands de gift of a ten-dollar match-box at a cost of less dan a tousand."

"You should let your frens know," says Miss Fannie, "what you do need and do want."

"What I needs," says Mr. Paul, "I manages by de excise of trift to get for meself; but what I wants I can't get, and de owner never gives me."

"It sounds like a riddle," says Miss Fannie. "What 's de answer?" she says.

"I 'll tell de answer," says Whiskers. "Paul must be Sandy Claus dis year. I 'm to act in de play."

"Let Burton be Sandy Claus," says Mr. Paul. "Burton has a bunch of chestnuts what would trun de children into blue fits of laughs," he says.

"Don't be steerical, Paul," says Mr. Burton—and on de level Mr. Burton is just as comic as a letter-box. "I acts in de play, too; so Sandy is up to you."

Mr. Paul says he would take up de poor man's boiden, and he began getting as next as two shingles on a roof—bote on de Sandy Claus and de stoige-manager games. He had a mug from a real teeater fix de hair, eyebrows, whiskers, and nose of Sandy so dey would all come off in a pull; and he

was dead keen on all de lay-out of de stoige, in de music-room.

Duchess says dere was some nonsense up, for Mr. Paul never took such interest in anyting for a proper poipose. I could n't see any fly racket in de game, but Duchess was not born in Hoboken, nor yesterday; so I just sawed wood like dere was notting doing. Dere was plenty of wood for a saw-mill.

De play was called "Above and Below Stairs." Ever see it? No? You was born lucky! It 's a English play, and as funny as a sore tumb. Whiskers picked it out because dere is a part for him where he gets gay wit Wily Widdy. Two of de parts dey could n't get nobody to play, de *Loidy's Maid* and *Valet*, 'cause dey was songs wit-out words—and no singing. Notting to do but get discovered behind a screen.

One of dese days a fly mug will write a play where somebody is discovered in front of a screen, instead of behind, and he 'll pay de national debt wit his winnings.

Well, Miss Fannie tells me and Duchess to play dose parts, and den Mr. Paul he got busier dan a copper wit a Reformer on his track. He fussed and fussed at rehoisals till he fixed to suit himself just de place and time me and Duchess was to go on. All de while Duchess was piping him off like she was saying, "*Nous verrons!*" Dat 's French for "mind your eye."

Listen: I tink I 'll take a day off and write a play meself. It 's only one kind of lying —and all kinds is easy. All dat was doing in our play was a *Duke*—Whiskers—a *Coinel*—Mr. Burton—and a *Countess*—Wily Widdy—and bote gents wanted her for deir steady. See? Each gent puts up de same job on de odder, to get him copped kissing de *Maid* behind de screen; but each gives de odder de double-cross by tipping de *Valet* to take his place behind de screen. *Countess* gets on to part of de plot, tinks *Duke* is to be behind de screen, so *Countess* tries to take *Maid's* place. Bote gents gets on to dat twist, and dey tries to get behind

de screen, so de whole push spars for openings till de screen is toppled. All dis is at a *bal maskay*, so nobody don't know who 's who, till *Valet* and *Maid* is discovered kissing each odder when de screen is trun down. Den *Countess* sends *Coinel* on his way, to dance jigs to mile-stones, and declares herself de *Duke's* steady. See?

"Where is de fun?" says Duchess. "If it was a French play *Countess* would be behind de screen, tinking de *Duke* was dere, and be discovered kissing de *Valet;* or de *Coinel* would try to kiss de *Maid*, and find he was kissing *Countess;* or *M'sieu le Duc* would tink he was kissing *Countess*, and really be kissing de *Maid;* or—"

"On your way!" I says. "To de steeples wit you!" I says. "Does n't nobody never kiss de proper party in France?" I says.

"Of a soitainty," she says. "Sometimes —by mistake. But never in plays, 'cause de play-writer has de fun all in his own hands. Surely, de English is one idiot,"

she says, "to take de trouble to write a play and make it as stupid as real life. What is it," she says, "for a maid to kiss a valet? *Mon Dieu!* does one go to de play to see such a ting? One might save de cost of tickets, stop to home, and take a peep below stairs, if one has no soul above de affair of a maid and a valet. Bah!" she says.

Say, forn folks is queer. What?

Every time we rehoised de play Mr. Paul made me and Duchess toin our backs to de audience when de screen tumbled.

"What for?" says Miss Fannie. "If dey toins deir backs de audience won't know who is discovered."

"For sure dey will," he says. "Dere will be a call before de coitain, and de audience will see de players witout deir masks on."

"It is a new kind of play," says Miss Fannie, "to hold back de danymong till after de fall of de coitain. But I spose you has good reasons, Paul," she says.

"De best ever," he says.

Well, on Christmas all de swell kids about our place comes to Little Miss Fannie's tree party, and deir pas and mas, and big brodders and sisters, chases along wit de kids, and dere was joy for fair.

Wait a minute: I 'm tinking if it was n't for de kiddies we 'd all give Christmas de long farewell, and send Sandy Claus to de tall timber. It would be, "On your way, Sandy!" for sure, if we did n't tink de little ones would miss him.

I 'm not whistling tru me side combs when I tell you dat. I 've seen Christmas trees of all sorts. I 've seen 'em in little tenement rooms where de fadders and modders go shy of enough to eat, so as to squeak out a few dimes for a twig of a tree and some candy and toys for de kids. Dey looks as happy as de kids when dey passes out de presents; and like as not forgets dey is hungry—seeing de little one's eyes sparkle at de tings Sandy has fetched. I 've seen Little Miss Fannie's tree, where de kids dat trot in her class get de pick of de

toy-shops, wit a few tings from de jeweler's chipped in for sweeteners.

De game 's de same at bote ends of de line. It 's de joy of de little ones—in parlor or tenement—dat makes de old folks forget dey has had too much to eat—or not enough!

Mr. Paul was n't funny—he did n't try to be—when he passes out de presents to de youngsters. He made 'em tink he was de real Sandy; and he says quiet little tings to 'em, like he can, what made some of de old folks misty about de eyeglasses.

When dat was over, de grown-ups chases into de music-room, where de stoige was, and de play was started. Tings went to beat a French shuffer on a steam racing bubble; Miss Fannie back of de stoige on one side, Mr. Paul, in his Sandy make-up, on de odder. Just before it was time for me and Duchess to go on, tru a door de audience could n't see, and take our places back of de screen, I heard Duchess give a

little squeal, and fall like she 'd been knocked out.

"What *is* de matter?" says Miss Fannie. I heard her across de stoige.

"*Mon Dieu!*" says Duchess, "I has broke me ankle. I cannot stand."

"What shall we do?" cries Miss Fannie, near trunning a fit wit noivousness.

"Madam must be so obliging as to take me place," moans Duchess.

"Very well," says Miss Fannie, and she takes de pink domino and mask off Duchess, and puts 'em on herself.

Just den Mr. Paul whispers in me ear: "Chames, de butler has taken too much egg-nog. You must hurry and get him out of de way."

"I will," I says, "when I has done me toin in de play."

"At once!" he whispers.

"Who 'll do me part?" I says.

"I will," he says. He drops de Sandy make-up, yanks me pink nighty off, gets into it, slaps on me mask, and scoots.

I chases to find Perkins, de butler—and stumbles on him piping de show tru a crack in de door, sober as a bull pup! I chases back to de stoige, just as Mr. Paul slides up to Miss Fannie, behind de screen.

Well, when de screen fell dey toins deir backs to de audience, and Mr. Paul lifts his mask just as Miss Fannie lifts hers. Honest, she was struck paralyzed when she seen who it was. He was n't. He bends over her, and gives her a kiss square as ever one was give. I let down de coitain.

Mr. Paul makes one jump to where I was, and hustles me into de domino; Duchess jumps to Miss Fannie, and takes her domino, and gets into it in one, two, tree motions.

De audience was calling for de players, and we goes out; me and Duchess behind de swells, of course; Duchess limping like she had bote feet sawed off.

On de level, tings had happened so quick not a soul but de four of us tumbled dat we had done a lightning-change act.

Miss Fannie comes to me wit her face

red as fire, and she says, "Chames, why did you not go on?"

"I had a stoige fright, Miss Fannie," I says, "and I could n't have moved if a battle-ship had butted me."

"It is very, very strange," she says, looking from me to Mr. Paul, "dat you and Hortense was bote disabled at de last second."

"Do not blame 'em," says Mr. Paul. "Chames and Hortense were but de lowly instruments," he says, "whereby Providence sometimes grants even de least desoiving what he don't need, but what he wants most uncommon."

She give him a look I could n't explain to you if I tried a tousand years, and left, wit her eyes shiny wit tears—of rage, I spose.

Dat night Duchess was doing fancy steps, and I says to her, "Me dear," I says, "your ankle got well very suddent. What cured it?" I says.

"I bandaged it wit dis," she says, and she flashed a crisp, long green ten at me.

XVIII

THE STATUS OF WOMAN

"And de man she makes dat home for sits dere all night, gambling!"

XVIII

THE STATUS OF WOMAN

"BOSTON," says Mr. Paul, "has a school what is teaching woman mining engineering, architecture, shoemaking, and foot-ball. De happy day is not far distance," he says, "when man will come into his rights; and, securely intrenched on de domestic fireplace, will," he says, "trun lovely woman out of de management of home and baby, into de cold, cold woild."

"Dat is nonsense," says Miss Fannie.

"Dat is, Paul," says Whiskers.

Mr. Burton, Miss Fannie's husband, was n't dere.

"Why," says Mr. Paul, "why dis frost? Logic is not nonsense. Is de woild," he says, "to go witout homes, or de home without housekeeping? Is de cradle to be left unrocked, stockings undarned? Is white

goods no more to be made up into essential garments for de Little Miss Fannies? Is burglars to remain unsought for under beds? Perish," he says, "de taut!"

"Sure not!" says Whiskers.

"Den," says Mr. Paul—"den de star of man's emancipation is rising," he says, "like a pan of bread. If dese tings must be done, it follows dat somebody must do 'em. Dey refuse to do demselves. If dey would, a Tessley, or a Maccaroni, would long ago found a wireless wife to do 'em. Man," he says, "having tasted de sweets of his altars and his fires, will fight before he lets 'em go out. But, sir, why fight? If lovely woman, free, white, and sweet sixteen, tackles de job of making shoes, voting, and foot-ball, man will carry on de altar and de fire at de old stand. He will refuse to again dwell in a cave, like a Indian untaxed."

"But," says Miss Fannie, "we women is n't going to desert home and baby for de field of politics or foot-ball."

"I fear," says Mr. Paul, "you is no better dan a poor weak vessel; a willing slave of shellfish man, wit a soul degraded to de trifles of housekeeping and domestic economies."

"Trifles!" Miss Fannie says. "I 'd not like you to see de kind of housekeeping done by women who tinks 'em trifles."

"You alarm me!" says Mr. Paul. "I hoped dat when woman had her rights, and left de home soicle to square de woild into one community of interest, we men would fall into de soft snap of taking care of de potted plants and parrots."

"Paul has you dere," says Whiskers. "What has woman to do dat is not trifles?"

"Foist," she says, "I tink de division of labor between man and woman as society has arranged it is de best achievement of society. What I mean," she says, getting a little red, 'cause Whiskers and Mr. Paul was listening so hard—"what I mean is dat dere seems to be two, big, natural divisions of labor: dat which provides de means for

home-making, dat which uses dose means for de poipose dey is provided. If it was n't a divine plan which gave one portion of labor and responsibility to man, de odder to women, den de plan which did make dat division is de best piece of woik human intelligence can be credited wit. I mean dat if dere was not just such a plan we would have to invent it, for witout it de home would not exist."

"Brava, me dear!" says Whiskers. "You has your fadder's aptitude for putting tings clear. Of course," he says, "I was joking when I spoke of woman's woik as trifles."

"Dey is trifles light and airy," says Mr. Paul.

"I 'd just like to see a man try to do 'em," says Miss Fannie. "I do not understand," she says, "what women can mean who say dat de care of a home and children does n't give 'em scope for deir energy and brains. A woman who has a dozen soivants, or none, is busy more hours a day—

and wit her brains, too—dan any man is, if she makes one home comfortable. Even a woman's social duties is done to keep up a social soicle for her men's enjoyment, as part of de home life—just as much as seeing dat meals is well cooked and soived, her house clean and sweet, her gowns attractive, her children well mannered. None of de woik is trifling; it 's hard, brainy woik, and it makes—de home!''

Miss Fannie stopped and laughed; for mostly she don't make no long talks, and was kinder noivous. I had to chew me cheek to keep from yelling, ''You 're de limit, Miss Fannie!''

Whiskers motions me to fill his glass—dis was at dinner—and he says, ''Paul, dere 's some trut in what Fannie says.''

''Some,'' says Mr. Paul. ''But de loidy does not tell why dere is so many women what wants to run primaries, and instruct in de philosophy of Spinoza.''

''I can tell you dat very easy,'' she says, shaking a finger at Mr. Paul. ''You

men is responsible for de whole bunch of trouble.''

I don't always remember just de langwudge dey uses, but I gets de sense.

''Meaning me?'' asks Mr. Paul, looking scared.

''Meaning man,'' says Miss Fannie. ''A lot of fool writers of de eighteent century taut it smart to tell women dey lacked sympaty wit de higher life. De man what wrote, 'Patience is de virtue of women and asses,' done more to make strong-minded women dan any woman's rights woman ever done. A lot of sillies told women dey was looked down on 'cause dey did n't tink and act like men. Well, women want to be popular wit men.''

''If dat 's deir only want,'' says Mr. Paul, ''I should say it was radder well supplied.''

''Don't interrupt,'' says Miss Fannie. ''I 'll have me say out on dis subject now, if I die for it. De real reason any woman wants to be what she calls emancipated is because her great-grandmodder's feelings

was hoit by somebody passing her out a bad joke on her commonplace aspirations. Just as soon as dey finds out dat man selects for his mate a natural partner—one who will attend to her part of de firm's woik—de emancipationists will go out of business. I do not agree wit you dat dere is many of 'em—but dey is so noisy!"

"Good goil!" says Whiskers. "Chames," he says, "Paul's glass is empty."

"Woise," says Mr. Paul, looking like a tree-time loser, "me heart is empty—of hope. I had hopes of one day settling down wit notting to do but give me valet plenty of plain sewing, and scold de iceman. But," he says, "I find I is condemned to man's strenuous life for life. Mr. Van Courtlandt mentioned me glass, Chames."

I was neglecting me business, trying to get a neck holt on his dude woids.

"Den I understands, Mrs. Burton," he says, when he 'd made a hole in de glass, "dat you is to bring Little Miss Fannie up wit no views on Carlyle, ignorant of re-

ciporal tariffs, into a career of idleness and five-o'clocks!''

''Little Miss Fannie,'' she says, ''will be learned enough about books to entertain herself wit 'em in any leisure she 's lucky enough to get when she 's head of a household. But she will be learned to be de head of a household. It is strange dat some men who enjoy homes tink dose homes is run by force of soicumstances, when de fact is de women who run 'em right has studied to prepare herself as hard as a man must to be a lawyer. A woman who is n't satisfied—proud—of such woik is weak or—wicked.''

''S-sh!'' says Mr. Paul. ''Dey claims all de strengt and most of de virtue dat was passed out to de sex.''

''Is n't deir strong point denying sex distinction?'' says Whiskers.

''No,'' says Mr. Paul. ''Dey insists dat de distinction remains. 'Female' is a lively woid wit 'em.''

''Truly,'' Miss Fannie says. ''Dey is all

'females,' poor tings; but I has me doubts dat dey is womanly. Man still insists upon having a 'woman' for his mate. When de emancipationists discovers de difference dey will agree dat if God did n't intend 'em for de place dey has in de social system, it was mighty lucky for 'em dat man did so intend. But,'' she says, ''not anodder woid on de subject. I 'll have coffee soived in de music-room, and play you some Rubinstein. You may smoke dere.''

I don't just cop who Rubinstein is. I knowed one geezer of dat name what used to live in de Sixt District, but I don't tink he wrote pieces for de piany. He made political speeches in Yiddish, down in Poverty Hollow, before de new bridge cleaned it out, and nailed a job, inspector of street cleaning. But de Reformers give him a hurry bounce 'cause he made de street-sweepers pungle a rake-off on deir wages. Whoever de mug was dat Miss Fannie played, he was a lulu for fair. De gents, sitting dere wit deir coffee and cigars—only de firelight on

Miss Fannie—made her play till I guess she must went tru Ruby's whole bunch of tunes.

Say, Mr. Paul is a queer bloke, after all. When I let him out of de house he says, "Want a walk, Chames?"

"Sure, sir," I says.

"Get de bull-dog," he says, "and call to my place for me."

I sheds me buttons, puts on a sweater and jacket, gets de dog out of de stable, calls for Mr. Paul, and we was off.

We pikes out Broadway, and we pikes and pikes and pikes. Never a woid says Mr. Paul, never a woid says I, never a woid says de dog. Walk? Listen: I ain't stringing you a little bit; we never stops going out till we struck de Harlem River. Dat 's right. Nobody says never a woid, but den we toins back. We must gone ten or twelve miles before anybody spoke, den it was only de dog. He asks me, "What 's doing?" and I says I don't know, and we pikes along.

Say, I likes de Lane any hour of de twen-

ty-four, but if it 's a case of long tramp, wit a gent dat has n't a woid to say, give me B.y. late at night. Company? No. Go alone radder dan wid a gabby mug dat takes your mind off de sights wit a fairy tale of what a winner he is, or passes you out his dinky hard-luck stories when you can see de limit—hard and good luck—acted all around you better dan on top of any stoige dat ever had a trap. Dat 's de Lane at night. Mr. Paul never saw 'em dat night: he saw notting. I did. I seen panhandlers, pickpockets, rough-house rats, sandbaggers —I know de signs of 'em all. When we was up in de darker end of town now and den a gang would pipe us off, guessing what kind of a game we 'd make. But we was never up against it. Mr. Paul has a pair of shoulders of his own, I 'm no airy, fairy Lizzy, and de bull-dog was walking on de edge of his foot like he 'd die wit joy if any old kind of a fight came his way. So dey give us de go-by. But all of it was n't tough. Where de Lane is lined wit teeaters

and restaurants de game was open—even if it was n't always fair. De gangs dere was n't looking for a chance to crack a coco for de price of a supper. Dey was all hunting supper, just as hard: suppers wit boid and bottles. De loidies helping de gents find supper tables looked like dey taut de setting moon was de rising sun. Dey must drink growlers of black coffee to be so wide awake so late at night—if dey has to git up at five in de morning to shake down de furnace and put on coal. Maybe dey does n't have to.

Honest, Mr. Paul never said a woid de whole way—only once, and den he did n't speak to me. It was near daylight, we was on de Avenoo again, and near home, when Mr. Paul says, like he was tinking out loud, "And de man she makes dat home for sits in dere all night, gambling!"

Where was dat? you say. Oh, up de Avenoo a little way. Come to tink of it, it was just in front of Mr. Burton's club.

XVIII

A FAMILY SKELETON

"Well, dat 's de way I felt when Duchess says dose woids."

XIX

A FAMILY SKELETON

"COME, Paul," says Mr. Burton, "me and Mr. Van Courtlandt is going Sout to play golf. Come along wit us," he says.

"No," says Mr. Paul, "I prefers to stay Nort. I used," he says, "to look wit de eye of disfavor upon our Nordern winter; but now," he says, "I hails it wit joy, because it stops golf-playing in dese parts. If golf was n't stopped here in de winter, I should join Lieutenant Peary in his poisonally conducted Arkic excursion. For," says he, "Peary, besides de happiness of being outside de golf zone, has all de comforts of home, and de excitement of a grandstand rescue just when him and his brave followers would perish from high living and lack of excise, if de rescuers was n't always strictly on time."

"Suit yourself," says Mr. Burton. "Dere 's a stateroom in our car if you wants it. It bores me to deat to hang around New York all winter," he says.

I heard Miss Fannie tell Wily Widdy dat de reason she was n't going was because Little Miss Fannie had begun school. De Little One wrote a piece about de "Humming Bird," and she spelled it "Huming Brad," so Miss Fannie says it would be a pity to drag her from de fountain-pen of learning, just when she was getting a strangle holt on de fount. Dose was n't quite Miss Fannie's woids, but her meaning.

Duchess laughs when I told her. "What 's de answer?" I says, when she gives me de ha-ha.

"De answer is," says Duchess, "dat Miss Fannie is n't going, 'cause M'sieu Burton did n't ask her. Miss Fannie already told me to get her ready to go, so I knows she taut she was going. But she get—what you say?—she get left."

"On your way!" I says, 'cause dat makes

me croisy. "Miss Fannie has what she wants."

"She may have what she want," says Duchess, "but not what she expect. I did not say she *want* to go wit M'sieu, but dat she *expect*."

"Be seated!" I says. "What 's de difference?" I says. Duchess only hands me out de shoulder shrug, and says dat if I did n't know I could n't understand.

Is n't dat like a woman? And tink of de noive of Duchess trying to learn me de meaning of langwudge! Me! Why, woids is me strong holt. I knowed I was right, but I says to Mr. Paul, after giving him his boxing excise, "Is n't 'want' and 'expect' de same ting?" I says.

He taut awhile, den he says, "It depends, Chames," he says, "wedder it is a condition or a teeory dat affronts us. For instance," he says: "being toisty, I want, let us say, a small bottle. I touch dis bell; me Oriental and solemn young valet appears; I orders him to fetch de bottle; he bows like

a ambassador, and, you see, de bottle arrives according to me wants. But," he says, "if I should laugh heartily at one of Mr. Van Courtlandt's jokes I should expect a small bottle, and get it, dough I might not want it. Do you follow?"

"Like a mice," I says, taking de pint from de Chap and pulling de plug.

"But I regret, Chames," he says, when I 'd filled de hole in his glass, "dat you has begun to take notice of de meaning of woids. Don't. I has observed your langwudge wit much pleasure and some profit. Your langwudge," he says, "is notable for dat it expresses your meaning, a quality lacking in de langwudge of most people, and special of dose dat uses de most of it. I has seen," he says, "sober and honest citizens take up de study of woids, and become so woozy dey is finally unable to express anyting more involved dan a package of candy; and is reduced to de single amusement of writing pieces to de poipers about woids and deir uses."

Say, is he a woid wonder? What? I puts a fresh collar on his schooner, and he sails on.

"Tell me, Chames," he says, "what was in your mind about 'expect' and 'want,' when you lighted de fuse of me bombassity?"

So I tells him what Duchess told me about Miss Fannie getting left for de trip Sout wit Mr. Burton. He got red, drinks up very slow, and den says: "I am glad you come to me about dis, for it must not be discussed outside de family soicle. Hortense," he says, meaning Duchess, "is a young woman of many inventions, and I want you, Chames, to say to her dat if she tells any one else about dis trip Sout, what she has said to you, I shall have a heart-to-heart talk wit her, in her own langwudge, dat will make her sit up."

He can do it, too. Once he give Duchess a game of French talk dat made her so good she forgot to touch me for me tips for two days.

"Duchess don't gab about our folks to nobody but me," I says. "Anyway," I says, for I had to stand by Duchess, "dere was notting wrong wit de talk, was dere?"

"No," he says, "but warn Hortense, all de same. An ounce of apples is wort a pound of cores," he says.

When I tells dis to Duchess she near trun a fit, and calls me tings in French dat was lulus, I guess; but, being forn, dey never touched me.

"What 's doing?" I says to her. "What 's de rough house about? Mr. Paul got red, you gets white, and I spose it 's up to me to get blue. What for?" I says.

Duchess kicked a hole in de carpet wit her heels, den she says, "*Mon ami*, is you stupid, or is you sly? One would die wit shame," she says, "if one taut she had married so stupid a man as you pretend to be. Don't you know," she says, "dat Mr. Burton is neglecting Miss Fannie, and dat she is trying to hide it from de woild? Don't you know dat Mr. Paul is in love wit Miss

Fannie, and he 's trying to hide dat from de woild—yes, and from her, too?''

Did I know it! Does anyting ever happen dat is n't for Miss Fannie's good, and me not know it? Say, I was n't brought up in gentlefolks' ways, and have no right to feelings above de way I was brought up, but I wish I could take all de jolts going, wedder meant for me or not, radder dan have one of 'em strike Miss Fannie. I 'd let de ambulance surgeon saw off me arm, and make no holler about it, to save her eyes from a single weep.

Yes, I knows all dat Duchess says, and knowed it before she did. But all de time I tries to jolly meself wit de notion dat it was n't so; played stupid, so no one could get from me dat it was so—always hoping it was n't. But hearing Duchess say dose woids, dat Mr. Burton was neglecting Miss Fannie, made me feel—wait, did you ever see a man hanged? I did once, in de Tombs, when dey used to drop 'em dere. He would n't believe he was up against it for

fair till he seen de rope just over his head. He knowed it den, suddent and hard, and —well, dat 's de way I felt when Duchess says dose woids. But I ain't handy at telling such tings.

Well, Mr. Burton being away so much dese days witout taking me, I acts as second man, and helps de butler at dinner. Dat evening Mr. Paul was to dinner, and so was Wily Widdy. Mr. Burton was dere, too, for a wonder, and he says to Widdy dat Mr. Paul was a lazy chap, 'cause he would n't go Sout to play golf.

"Not lazy," says Widdy. "Good-natured."

"How 's dat?" says Burton, like he did n't care wedder she told him or not.

"Because," says Widdy, "wit you and Mr. Van Courtlandt away, if Mr. Paul went, too, Fannie and me would have no best young man to take off our cloaks at de opray. Dat 's why he 's not going."

I happens to be looking at Miss Fannie just den, dough I was passing someting to

Mr. Paul. I seen her give Mr. Paul a look about de tousandt part of a second, and I felt his hand start, but he says in de laziest voice he has, "I must let your odder best young man do opray-box duty," he says. "I am going Sout wid Burton."

Widdy looks sharp at Miss Fannie, and at Mr. Paul, but dey bote had smood fronts.

"Good chap, Paul," says Burton. "When did you change your mind?"

"I always meant to go," says Mr. Paul. "But," he says, "I 've been trying for a long time to display me wit over de annual Arkic picnic, and press-agent rescue, of Lieutenant Peary," he says, "and your invitation give me a chance for me witticism. I am dying to play golf in de sunny Sout."

When I tells Duchess about dat she says: "M'sieu Paul is a gentleman. I wish," she says, "dat M'sieu Burton would fall into a golf hole and break his neck."

"He 'd break a record, sure, if he did dat," I says. "But I 'll take de job of

breaking his neck if Miss Fannie would give me de tip."

"Dat is n't de way wit women like her," says Duchess. "Dey suffer, and say notting, if dey is only sure nobody knows dey is suffering. It is de women dat wants de woild to know dey is suffering dat wants de man's neck broke."

"What man?" I says.

"*De* man," says Duchess. "Dere is always a man."

As soon as all de gents was gone Sout, Widdy finishes her town errants in hurry-call time, and was off to de woods. Duchess says dat Widdy cares less for Wagner dan Webberfield when dere 's no man to go to de opray wit her.

Mr. Burton did n't take me along because Duchess is—but not a woid!

De next day Miss Fannie says, "Chames," she says, "how is dat poor woman getting along what we visited Tanksgiving day?"

"To de limit," I says. "Wit de tings you send, and de five-spot wafer I gives her

each week for Mr. Paul, she is getting fat enough to kill," I says.

She says we 'd go and see her; so I gets on de box wid coachy, and we drives Miss Fannie down to de poor widdy I was telling you of what sells poipers at de Bridge. Mrs. Murphy was dere, and de five kids, and tings was as comfortable as a pup in a basket. De widdy begins tanking Miss Fannie, "and your kind husband for de five dollars a week he sends by Chimmie," she says.

"Dat is not sent by me husband," says Miss Fannie.

"Saints save us!" says de widdy, not catching de wink I gives her. "Chimmie said it was from de gentleman what was here wid you. I taut it was your good man," she says, "so I teached de children to pray for him every night."

Murphy seen dat it was up to somebody to say someting quick, so she chips in. "Sure," she says, "lave de childher pray for him. He needs prayers said for him all

de more for not being Miss Fannie's husband, poor man," she says.

When we was home Miss Fannie says to me, "Mrs. Murphy is a droll character."

"Dull?" I says, not understanding.

"Not at all dull," she says. "Droll."

I don't just cop dat woid, but I copped dat Miss Fannie was n't sore on Murphy.

XX

AT THE OPERA

Sympathy.

XX

AT THE OPERA

GIVING Mr. Paul his boxing excise de odder day, he says to me, "Chames," he says, "I has just read, in a great novel called 'On Your Way,' dat de best cure for a strong toist is to get a rap on your coco."

"Not me," I says; "a punch on de conk gives me a toist."

"Dat being de case," he says, "we will put on smaller gloves, and lay love-taps aside for a round or two."

My, my! for de next tree rounds I had de hustle of me life. Mr. Paul is n't quite so smart as me getting in and away, and side-stepping, but he can hit harder, and dat makes an even match of it. Say, someting was doing for fair; when we quits dere was a little washing up to do, and we used up a bit of court-plaster after dat.

I was wondering what was boddering Mr. Paul. Of course I likes a friendly scrap whenever one comes me way, but he only calls for de small gloves when someting is on his mind dat scratches.

I tells Duchess about it, and she says, "De American gentleman is *bizarre*," she says.

"Dey arre," says I. "You ought to know; you landed one."

"*C'est vrai*," she says. "But I speak of de odder kind, not de Bowery gent. If someting have distress de American gentleman he want de fight—what you say?—*le boxe*. Wit de gentleman of France it is not so. If his heart is trouble he write poetry, or drink absence. Why not?"

"Search me," I says. "I don't know de answer. What 's de best way to catch a squirrel?"

"Search me," says she.

"Climb a tree, and make a noise like a nut," I says.

"Dat is of a nonsense! I knows de trouble wit M'sieu Paul," says she.

"Give it a name," says I.

"It is love," she says.

"He must have it hard," I says, feeling of me eye.

"It is a grand passion," says Duchess, looking a tousand miles over me head.

"It 's out of sight," I says. "If Mr. Paul has it for keeps, I 'll go into training, so dat I can give him all de sympaty he wants."

"Sympaty is not de cure," she says. "Let me put some hot water on your eye. Did he give you a tip?"

"He did," I says. "He give me a couple of seats for de opray."

"*Quel régal!*" says Duchess. "It is 'Faust.' I 'll keep your eye in hot water all day, so dat you shall not look of such drollness."

Say, we went, all right. Did you ever see dat opray? It 's de finest play I ever see out on top de stoige, and has songs in it,

too. It makes "Florrie Dorrie" look like bad money. It was wrote by a fren of Duchess. He knows his business. Let me tell you foist about how we broke into de opray teeater.

I puts on me best harness—de dress close Mr. Paul give me—and Duchess! say, Miss Fannie must give her a trunk key and told her to help herself. From her waistband down she was a dream, a peach! Above dat—well, in de street it was all right, 'cause she wored a big cloak, and it was warm in de Opray House, so she did n't take cold. She took chances, dough. But no more dan de loidies in de boxes. Some of 'em looked like dey was playing peek-a-boo over de edge of a bat-tub. Dey calls it full dress. I calls dat getting gay wit de langwudge, if I knows de meaning of "full."

Well, when we gets to de teeater dere was a million carriages on Broadway and bote side streets.

"I wish," says Duchess, "we could come in a carriage. Me *toilette* deserves it."

"Dat 's easy," I says.

We chases around to de side street where a lot of coachmen I knows was unloading deir folks. I tips de wink to one coachy, he cops me game, we jumps in, and rides around de corner like we 'd come a mile. Tiger opens for us proper, I hands out Duchess, tiger and coachy salutes solemn, and we butts into de push. Listen: in de middle of de sidewalk I steps on de toes of Kelly, de B.y. cop I knows.

"Make way! me good man," I says to him. "You has two left feet," I says. "Make way!"

I don't tink he has caught up wit his breat yet.

But I was going to tell you about de opray. In de foist act dere is an old gazeaboo who tinks he 'll take a jump from de Brooklyn Bridge 'cause he 's getting too old to step lively when he takes an L car. He tinks again when he hears some Easter bells, so he sings a song.

Dat 's de trouble wit opray; notting doing

till somebody has a chance to sing a song. It 's like de smokers I goes to in me precinct club. We 'll be all ready to see a pair of light-weights do a few rounds, when de announcer says, "Mr. Cully will oblige wit a song." It 's to de bad.

Well, a gang outside sings a song, and de gazeaboo says he 'll call on his spirit and see if he can't change his luck. Dis brings on a head-liner wit a name I never could tell you in a tousand years. I can't get furder wit it dan "*Mephis.*" Duchess says it 's a forn woid for de devil. Anyway, he tells de gazeaboo to cheer up; dat he 'll give him de time of his life if he 'll sign to play ball wit him whenever he 's wanted.

"In a minute!" says de gazeaboo. Dey does stunts wit red fire; *Mephis* shows him a picture of a goil what will be his steady; dey sings a song, and *Faust*—dat 's de gazeaboo—is changed to a dude witout leaving de stoige. Say, it 's great!

De head-liner goil is named *Maggie.* Not quite dat, but let it go at dat. She

wears her hair like de goil in de song from Hackensack, but *Faust* is a dead swell mug for fair. He meets *Maggie* on her way home, and gives her de glad eye. But she is a good goil, and gives him de trun-down.

"What 's doing?" says *Faust* to *Mephissy*. "Your red-fire stunts is no good," he says.

"You gets gay too suddent," says *Mephissy*. "You has been a back number so long you is not next to de ways of fashionable society," he says. "Dat was not a trun-down for fair; it was de haughty bluff. You led hearts out of turn, and she renigged. We 'll play diamonds wit her next, and see does dat suit her hand," says *Mephissy*.

But before *Mephissy* gets to woik a cowboy, named *Siebel*, what has been *Maggie's* steady, fetches a bunch of flowers to *Maggie's* back yard, and leaves 'em dere for her. He sings a song, sure.

Den *Mephissy* comes in, pipes de flowers de lad has left, and says, "Nay, nay! Dat young poisson can't play in dis back yard.

Dis will make her forget her *Sieby* and his roses,'' and he leaves a box of diamonds dere. He was a wood-sawyer, dat mug.

Den *Maggie* comes on. She makes a bluff at spinning, but de only yarn she spun was a song about *Faust*. She says he 's de slickest young man she ever see coming down de lane. She finds de flowers, and lets on she 's tickled to deat; but when she cops de diamonds—dat 's de finish of de flowers! What?

Nobody asks her to, but she obliges wit anodder song while she tries on de sparklers; and den *Faust* and *Mephissy* breaks into de game. *Faust* asks *Maggie* what 's de matter wit his being her steady. She can't give him a heart-to-heart talk till *Mephissy* jollies an old lady out of de way. Den, barring a song or two, dey gets along pretty well till *Maggie* tells him it 's time for him to chase himself. He chases; but she forgets her manners, peeps tru de blinds, and fetches him back—wit a song.

But de next act is a corker! *Maggie* has

a brodder named *Val*, who is going off to de Philippines to get fever or promotion. Before he goes he naturally comes on de stoige wit his regiment to sing a song. Dat was de boss song of all.

Well, *Val* was a scrapper, of course, and seeing *Faust* hanging around, he says to him, "On your way! Don't get gay around dis corner," he says. "To de woods!" *Faust* says he has as much right to travel in dat ward as *Val*, and from slanging each odder dey pulls deir swords. Listen: *Val* could done him. He could got de decision if de scrap was on de level, but it was n't. *Mephissy*, seeing *Faust* up against it, pulls his sword, too, and *Val* could n't stand off de community of interest.

It was n't a square deal. I told Duchess so, but she pinches me, and tells me to hold me tongue, 'causes *Val* was due on a song.

Sure money! *Val* tells *Maggie* what he tinks of her—and he trun her no bouquets—and she waits for him to sing his song,

and falls on him so he could n't take a encore. Coitain.

Den Duchess jaws me! "You has no more manners," she says, "dan de swells in de boxes. If you must talk," she says, "hire a box."

De last act is in Sing Sing. And dat 's no joke, too. *Maggie* is dere, but has lost her good close, her back comb, her mind, and near everyting but her singing voice. Dat 's doing business at de old stand. I did n't hear what she was jailed for. *Mephissy* and *Faust* has a pull wit de jailer, and dey calls on *Maggie*, to say dey 'll go bail for her if she 'll go along wit dem. She says she 'd radder stay where she is dan travel in such company. Dey says, "So long; but as we is all in jail togedder, let us, anyway, have a song before we part."

Of course dey had it. It was a lulu, too, but I don't know what it was about, for Duchess was so croisy mad at de folks putting on cloaks and rubbers while de song was going on, she would n't tell me a woid.

Say, she had a right not to rag me for talking at de opray. I never peeped but once, and den I whispered.

I did n't know why folks talks at de opray, so I asks Mr. Paul about it.

"Chames," he says, "when de Carnegie Institution at Washington is open for business, I shall make original research into dis matter you mention. Andrew is a good soul to put up de ten millions to let me do it. I shall devote de remaining days of a melancholy life to discover de reason why folks goes to de opray to talk."

"Why don't you ask some woman?" I says. "Dey does most de talking."

"I knows none of dose women, but will consent to meet one for de sum Mr. Carnegie donates. Den, by a short soul-to-soul chat, I hopes to explain," he says, "de phenomenon."

XXI

A DRAMA AND A TRAGEDY

"Yelled 'Hock de Geezer!' enough times to show I was wit de jolly."

XXI

A DRAMA AND A TRAGEDY

QUITE a long time I don't see you? Dat 's right. We has been to de country four or five weeks, and I has n't chased into town much. De kind of wind dat blows up and down de lanes of Manhattan is de kind to blow hayseed out of your whiskers—even if you has n't no whiskers. Dat 's what me and Duchess hikes in for. "Cheemes," she says, "now dat everything in de country house is settled down, and we has our folks in good order, let us," she says, "take our day off in de city. I has some errants, and one wishes to show one's frens how one looks in one's mourning."

When Duchess gets chesty she calls herself "one," but Whiskers sometimes calls

himself "we." I hear him say de odder day, "Paul," he says, "we must see dat Fannie has occupation: riding, driving, walking," he says.

He said "we," but he meant himself, 'cause it 's only him dat talks, reads, walks, drives, rides wit Miss Fannie. He 's like he was her sweetheart, instead of her fadder. Say, he 's a good sort, all right, for fair. Mr. Paul, dese days, kind of hangs around till he sees Miss Fannie started out wit Whiskers, den he starts out by himself. When I rides behind Miss Fannie I cops Mr. Paul not far off, saying notting.

But I was going to tell you about our foist day in town for a mont. De minute we strikes de Avenoo Duchess wafts a one-spot wafer into a flower-shop to blow us bote off wit bunches of violets big as your hand.

"Poiple is de color of half-mourning," she says, "and bote flower and color is becoming to me style of beauty."

"How about me?" I says. "Is dey becoming to my style and beauty?"

"De beauty of your style, *mon ami*," she says, "is dat it needs no odder ornament dan me. *Au contraire*, a woman wit a handsome husband is never beautiful herself."

"Oh, I don't know, Duchess," I says. "You is n't such a bad looker yourself."

"Of a trut," she says. "Only one of a married couple can be a good looker."

"Is it up to me?"

"You is lucky I was not looking for beauty."

"What was you rubbering for, den?"

"English," she says. "When you foist have proposed to me I ask Miss Fannie how did you speak de English; for den I could not perfect speak it as now, nor de good from bad speech tell. Miss Fannie tell me dat Mr. Paul say your English most entertaining was. *Voilà*, I consent to make you happy, for dat I wish to improve me langwudge."

"Barring a forn twist or two, your langwudge is de limit," I says.

"But," says she, "some French frens,

who have learn English from de books, say I have many woids dey have not. I tell 'em I has copped de limit for fair, all right, and dey regard me wit de astonish. So I say, 'What 's doing? Is you not next to de game?' I say, and dey is more amaze. Den I say, 'On your way! To de woods wit you!' and one say to me, 'It is dat you speak German, maybe, but not de English.' How is it, Cheemes?'' she says.

''I 'll put you wise, Duchess,'' I says. ''How would some American loidies you hears bluffing at French get on in Paris?''

''Dey would go 'way back and sit down,'' she says.

''Sure,'' I says. ''I has learned you English as she is spoke in Manhattan, and you 'll never be sold no gold bricks. Your frens could write pieces for de poipers, maybe, but if dey asked deir way to de Bridge tru de Bowery, dey 'd land in de Bronx, or in jail.''

Duchess had to go over to de poor widdy I pays five per week to, for Mr. Paul, to

see about fixing Little Miss Fannie's close to de widdy's children. I leaves her dere, singing French songs to de kiddies while she measures 'em, and I waltzes over to de Bowery to say "howdy" to me fren de bar-keep. When I butts into his place it was doing trade to beat a bargain-counter, and I soon cops dat de head-liners drawing de crowd was a bunch of German sailors from de *Honezolen*.

Say, de Bowery is n't so woise. Dere was n't no Committee of One Hundred to keep de sailors from getting mixed up wit middle-class society, and common tax-players from getting a peep at 'em, but dey was being done fair. It was n't two hundred and fifty per box, wit opray on de side, to get next: just de price of beer, and de Bowery Four Hundred was putting up de price, and singing "Voch tum Rhyme" to beat a band. When I 'd yelled "Hock de Geezer" enough times to show I was wit de jolly, I gadders in Duchess, and we chases to a matinée.

De play was called "De Inspector's Bride." Not a Police Inspector—higher up: an Inspector dat helps folks smuggle on de steamer docks. Dat 's a soft snap. De mug acting de hero has a right to stand on de dock and hold up folks coming back from forn parts, and tell 'em how much dey must tip him. Any one dat did n't tip enough he 'd report to his boss, who 'd trun deir close out on de dock, pour oil on 'em, den fine 'em all de boodle dey had, and send 'em to jail.

Is dat a lulu of a graft? What! It was a cinch any way it was played. If you did n't yield to de Inspector, den de government would teach you to be good by making you yield, and take or spoil your close. But de Inspector was give de foist hack at you, and dat 's what de play was about.

Inspector was getting notting but ready money: sinking green wafers in his jeans every time a victim came down de gangplank at de back of de stoige. Sometimes a silly would kick, or offer only a shy wafer

to be let tru witout getting de coal-dust and oil treatment for his trunks. Den Inspector would hand him out a short story.

"What is we coming to?" he says. "Has a office-holder no rights in dis country? What do you spose I 'm holding down dis job for? For me healt?" he says. "You 'll report me, you say? Why, young felly, I has a pull in Washington dat would capsize de White House. No, you can't get me broke for blackmail. Yield!" he says, "or out goes your close in de ashes," he says.

Say, we yells murder wit laughing when de silly would tumble to de cinch, and pungle de long, long green.

Well, near de end of de play along comes a dead swell dame, and a peach of a goil who was her daughter. Dey had tons of trunks, and Inspector sees dat he was up against de chance of his life. De dame was no farmer lass, herself, and she strips a twenty off her wad, slips it to Inspector wit a high-toned wink, and tells him to chalk her trunk.

He looks at de double X like he was tired, and says, "What is dis for?"

"For yourself," she says, giving him de knowing eye.

"Nay, nay, fair loidy," he says. "I would not be what your gold would make me."

"Good heavens!" she cries. "Must I part wit me patrimony for protection?" and she passes him over her pocket-book, her check-book, and a fountain-pen.

"Villain!" she says, "do your woist! write out a check for de balance at me banker's. But do not, oh, kind sir," she says, "because you has me in your power, do not dump me wardrobe on de dock, and kick de frills out of me daughter's frocks wit your cruel feet," she says.

"Proud loidy," he says, "I will freeze to your wad and your check-book, lest you should buy a bale of green-goods wit 'em. But tink not," he says, "to purchase freedom wit such dross."

"What more can I do, hard-hearted

man?" she says. "I has notting else but me house on de Avenoo, and me cottage at Newport. Alas! dey is bote mortgaged to de limit; but take 'em, mortgage and all, and chalk me trunks!"

"Woman!" he says, "I scorns your boodle! It is not gold I seek."

"You must be new to de business," she says. "Pray tell me what it is you would wit me."

"I would your daughter wed," he hisses.

"Reckless man!" she says. "Her pin money alone would break a bank. No!"

"Give me your daughter," he says, "or your frail French frock-frills fly to de four windes of heaven. Den give de government your house and cottage, and you—off to de dungeon! ha, ha!" he says.

"Oh, monster! will notting touch your heart?" says she.

"I have sworn de pirate's oat," says he.

"How can you keep me child in our set?" she says.

"Dear loidy," he says, "I may be no

steel magnet, but I has a cinch on dis job."

"If dat is true," says she, "take me daughter, and spare me trunks!"

Say, was dat play a dream?

I was telling Mr. Paul about it, and he says, "Chames," he says, "realism in de drama can be carried far too far. When you has been tru de hands of a customs inspector you would no more go to see dat play dan a boiler-maker would go to see a modern comic opray. De bearing of dis observation lies in de supplication of it," he says.

"But, sir," I says, "de play was n't real; it was only make believe."

"You mistake, Chames. De incident happened only a few years ago. Early dis season I danced de cotillion wit de loidy what married de Inspector. She is a leader of our hotong, and is now training her husband for de United States Senate. Already his press-agent has got several of his after-dinner speeches into de poipers. He is

tipped to win by de wise, for nobody so rich as him is in de race. De drama, Chames, should not twit upon facts."

Den Mr. Paul loafed away. He don't give me no long games of talk dese days.

What 's dat you say—de mourning-band on me arm? Was n't I telling you about dat? Mr. Burton died. Dat was before we went down to de country, four or five weeks ago. De doctor told noisse, who told housekeeper, who told Duchess, who told me what happened. Mr. Burton came home from de club early one morning in his evening dress, and left his overcoat open. He was down only tree days—den out—and dat was just how long Miss Fannie did n't shut her eyes. Duchess told me so.

Mr. Paul calls at de house twice each day, asks how was Mr. Burton, but never came in. When it was all over Mr. Paul takes a steamer, goes to London, stops dere a week, gets cable from Whiskers—his valet told me—comes back, and shows up at de country place.

Whiskers is always saying to him, "We must ride," or "We must drive," or we must do dis or dat; but her fadder goes out wit her, and Mr. Paul tags along witout letting her know.

"What for?" I says to Duchess.

"What for?" she says. "You is most ignorant. M'sieu Paul was not wise, once —he is now. When Miss Fannie begin to take notice again M'sieu Paul intends to be on hand. And *mon Dieu!*" she says, "if it was not impolite to de memory of M'sieu Burton, one should say Miss Fannie have a right to take notice soon. *Comprenez-vous?*"

Dat 's French for "See?"

XXII

THE WILY WIDOW'S RUSE

"For about 'steen minutes I was de busiest ting dat ever buzzed."

XXII

THE WILY WIDOW'S RUSE

IF ever I rigs up anodder job on Wily Widdy I 'm a muddy oaf. She 's a dead-game sport, and has two right feet.

Listen: Since Mr. Burton went his way, and dat 's two monts ago, now, Widdy never showed up around our place till de odder day. She was down to Florida, "catching cold and tarpon," she says, but when she hikes Nort she goes to her place on de Sound near our place, where we is stopping at now. Well, one day Duchess comes to me and says I was elected to take de family out walking; Whiskers and Mr. Paul being too busy in de billiard-room, playing ping-pong, and not to be broke into. So it was up to me to be fadder of de regiment.

First rank, Miss Fannie and Duchess; next, Little Miss Fannie and governess; next, noissery maid, wit a bunch of extra wraps; last, me and de bull-dog—him all over de lot; me, a stick in me hand against a chance run-in wit a hobo on de road. We pikes along solemn as a string of boarding-school goils on de Avenoo, governess "s-sh"-ing de Little One if she shied a snowball at me, and all as jolly as a Patress Campbell play. I knowed it was no kind of business to be doing if we was ever to get a laugh out of Miss Fannie. I was tinking of making a running-jump header into a snowdrift by way of a bit of fun, when we meets Widdy in her sleigh bound for our place. She truns groom de reins, runs to Miss Fannie, gives her a kiss, and never passes out a bunch of tears; but jabbers, jokes, and laughs, like she had a muff-full of winning tickets, and knew her hat was on straight. Governess was shocked, noissey scared, Little One puzzled, but Duchess tosses me a wink like she was giving tanks

dat we 'd met a honest Christian not tongue-tied. I wanted to yell, but only rolled Little One in de snow till she yelled wit laughing. My, my! but dat was good to hear again. I taut we 'd all forgot to remember how to laugh.

Bull-dog and me toins about, and marches back home at de head of de regiment. Whiskers and Mr. Paul was in front of de house waiting for us, and her grandad shies a snowball at Little One dat hits Widdy.

"Oh," says Widdy, "dat 's a game for two." She fires back at Whiskers, and gives me a quick whisper, "Get busy, Chames!"

Dat was just what she says, and just all she says, but I tumbled. For about 'steen minutes I was de busiest ting dat ever buzzed. I lands a snowball big as a keg on Whiskers' coco; him and Mr. Paul shoots back; Miss Fannie is hit, gets her spunk up and waltzes into de scrap; I upsets noissey and governess into a drift; de dog was barking himself out of his hide; Little One was hollering her head off wit joy; Duch-

ess makes balls for me, and I pelts all hands, playing no favorites; and someting was doing all over de lot till nobody could n't do no more for laughing.

When she got de snow out of her eyes Miss Fannie tells noissey to chase Little One into de house for dry close. Den she peeks all around, and says, "I tink every one wearing petticoats better do de same," and all de women dives for de house.

I was wondering would Whiskers rag de hide off me for getting gay wit me betters, but he gives me a clap on de shoulder, and says: "Dat was well done, Chames. It melted as much gloom as snow."

"Mrs. Harding give me de tip, sir," I says.

"She is a loidy of sense," says he.

When I was brooming de snow off de gents on de front porch Widdy sails down.

"Tank you, Mrs. Harding," says Whiskers to her.

"What have you stupid men been about?" she says. "I won't have no gloomy non-

sense here," she says. "If Fannie had been on more dan mere speaking terms wit de late lamented for de past two years it would be different. Your man," she says, looking at me, "and his wife is de only sensible beings about de place. Dat 's one good result of de liberties you give 'em. Paul," she says, "have you lost your wits?"

"Lost everyting, me dear Mrs. Harding," he says, "in admiration of your wits."

"Dat 's a proper speech, young man," says she. "Now I want some tea."

"Soitainly," says Whiskers. "Chames, order tea soived. You will pour for us, Mrs. Harding?" he says.

"I 'll do no such a ting!" says Widdy, and p'chee she looked like a little boss. "Fannie will pour for us all."

Dat trun a scare into Whiskers. "I don't like to ask her," he says. "She has not been down to tea wit us since—"

"Oh, I 'll ask her," says Widdy, cutting off his wire. "You and Paul is a couple of sillies. It 's a good ting dat I got here be-

fore Fannie got de notion into her head dat she really had someting to mourn for," she says, and waltzes up-stairs again.

Say, Miss Fannie did pour tea, and tings cheered up for fair.

"I 'm going to ask meself to dinner," says Widdy. "And after dinner we is going to have some music. Mostly folks don't have no music in de opray season, but we is country cousins, and will change de rule."

Busy? Well, say, honest, dere was n't notting she forgot to do—except to get gay wit Whiskers, or Mr. Paul. She was just plain busy all around, and particular around Miss Fannie. I heard Whiskers tell her she was a good sort for jollying de game.

"Why should n't we be honest down here where dere is no one to discover our honesty?" she says to him. "It would be different in de city, wit a lot of fool gossips" —dese is n't just her woids—"making a bluff of being shocked at anyting doing except solemn doings. Out here I 'm going to tune tings up a bit," she says.

She 's making good, too. What I takes me bonnet off to her most for is dat Widdy don't rubber to nobody but Miss Fannie. She tells de gents go dance jigs to milestones till she wants 'em; and she never wants 'em till she 's rigged a jolly of some old kind for Miss Fannie.

I says to Duchess, "Widdy," I says, "is to de good. I stands back of her corner after dis, no matter what kind of a ring she 's boxing in. She 's a strawberry," I says.

"*Elle est très-aimable,*" says Duchess, passing me out some French woids dat mean Widdy was to de good. "Of a soitainty she should be. De game is going—what you say?—going her way."

"What game?" says I.

"Is dere more dan one game of interest to women?" says Duchess.

"I 'm innocent," says I. "De longer I know 'em de less I know 'em. What 's de answer?" I says.

"Of trut, it is de game of sentiment,"

says Duchess. "Madame Harding has make up her mind what it is she will try to do, and dat she can do it. A woman is agreeable—even to odder women—when she believe she is to have what her heart desire."

"If you is a mind-reader, me dear," I says, "toin loose, and tell what 's doing, but quit your riddles."

"It is of a simple," says Duchess. "Madame Harding return to find one no longer a wife, but a widdy. What now? 'Ah!' she say, 'Miss Fannie no longer will object to attentions her papa pay me—*if* I pay not any to M'sieu Paul.' So. Well, she make herself of de agreeable, and de merry, for dat Miss Fannie will be of de agreeable and de merry. *Pour quoi?*"

"Same here—for what?" says I.

"It is easy," says Duchess. "Now dat Miss Fannie is of liberty to take notice of M'sieu Paul, de sooner she do so de sooner Madame Harding has a—what you say?—a clear field wit M'sieu Van Courtlandt."

"To de woods!" I says. "You talk woise nonsense dan a fortune-teller. Widdy is jollying de game because she is good people. Dat 's all."

Duchess gives me de shoulder shrug, den de laugh, and says, "Oh, yes; to be sure; but we will have a pretty drama to watch, no matter how it end."

Dere is no use for a sensible mug to argue wit a woman when she strikes her gait on dat lane of talk, so I chases over to Mr. Paul to see does he want a toin wit de gloves.

"I was just considering," says Mr. Paul, "wedder I 'd warm up wit de gloves, or hire out as a stoker on a steamer. We has two kinds of climate in dis delightful country—when you can't get cool, and when you can't get warm. If de equator has not left its happy home for us, den de nort pole brings its knitting to our own fireside. In summer, when de only comfort would be to take off our flesh and sit in our bones, we is flanneled like fools; in winter our discontent is made inglorious by living in

houses which can be warmed only by collecting de insurance on 'em. De district attoiney of de city and county of New York is de only sensible gent I has de honor of knowing: he has kept himself in hot water all winter."

"He is a sleut," I says, "and a sleut is a warm proposition."

"I has obsoived," says Mr. Paul, "dat de art of sleuting is expanding woise dan our national boundaries. In de simple days of old," he says, "when a gentleman was so impulsive as to kill anodder, Headquarters piped in a brace of fly cops, wit large jaws and roomy fists, but no more foreheads dan was needed to keep deir hair and eyebrows apart, and told 'em to gadder in de moiderer. And mostly dey did. But how is it now, Chames?"

"Grand-stand play, press-agents, reputation—but no coon skins," says I.

"As you remark, Chames, in past days a man would not brag about what a great coon-hunter he was until he had some coon

skins to show. But coon skins is no more in fashion. Let us consider de case now filling tree or four pages of our most sprightly poipers.

"A man is found who has suddenly ceased to labor under de disadvantage of being alive. Upon de scene promptly appears two patrol wagons loaded wit ordinary cops, led by de precinct captain, sergeant, and two roundsmen; sixteen men from Headquarters, in command of six detective sergeants, and two press-agents; de district attoiney, two deputy district attoineys, seventeen assistant deputy district attoineys, and five county detectives from de district attoiney's staff; two coroners, accompanied by lawyers, and attended by fighting clerks, loaded to de muzzle; seven hundred and fifty criminal news detectives from de daily poipers wit photographers, telegraphers, telephoners, scare-head writers, copy readers, managing editors, handwriting and blood-stain experts, from de same; moving-picture takers from de principal vaudeville teeaters;

firemen, and boiler inspectors—de man may have been burned down or blown up.

"When de convention came to order de chairman appointed a committee of criminal news detectives to visit de houses of all de young loidies de dead man knew, and tell deir parents deir daughters was no better dan dey should be, and obtain photographs of same. Ordered printed. Headquarters sleuts was rushed off to locate de Sunday-school teachers of all de young loidies de dead man ever saw, get pictures, locks of hair, and names of deir favorite actors. Ordered printed in colors. Plain cops was chased out to arrest all young loidies de dead man never seen, get pictures for de press, give toid degree. Ordered printed. Two million extras, proving—wit pictures—dat two hundred men, women, and children was guilty of de crime was distributed, and de convention adjourned."

"Who done de moider?" I says.

"It was a case of suicide," says Mr. Paul.

XXIII

THE LITTLE DUKE ARRIVES

"Your Honor could n't keep better company," she says to Whiskers.

XXIII

THE LITTLE DUKE ARRIVES

MY, my! What do you tink? You 'd never guess it in a tousand years. What? You know from me looks? Dat 's what everybody says. You 're right. It 's a Little Duke. He 's four weeks old today. Duchess and me is to have him christened next week, and Miss Fannie and Whiskers is to stand in his corner—is to be godmodder and godfadder for him, I mean. Say, he 's a woild wonder! He 's to have a name as long as your arm, but I calls him Little Duke, seeing as how his modder is Duchess. Is n't dat right? What! My, my! but we has been having de time of our life.

Listen: when Little Miss Fannie was born Duchess bossed de head off everybody all

over de lot, taking care of her mistress. But she did n't do no more dan Miss Fannie has done since his Dukelets arrived. She could n't done more, for Miss Fannie has been bossing tings like Duchess was her sister, instead of her maid.

My, my! I don't know what to tell you about foist.

When de little codger was a week old I was croisy for me modder to have a peek at him, but I did n't ask, cause dey was all doing Duchess and de kid so fair, I taut it was up to me to say notting. But Miss Fannie tells me to invite me modder up to our place on de Sound to see her grandkid. I says I taut I 'd have to take kiddie down to me modder, for de old loidy always gets lost when she goes above Fourteent Street; dough she was born on Manhattan Island, like me.

Miss Fannie asks could n't dat "droll creature"—dat 's what she calls Mrs. Murphy—find her way up to de Sound and back. "Sure," I says. "Mrs. Murphy could find

any way, so long as it runs in or out of Manhattan.'' So Miss Fannie tells me to send for Murphy to bring me modder up to our place.

Dat was de day Miss Fannie showed Little Duke to Whiskers and Mr. Paul in her own room. You should seen de jolly dey makes of it. Foist, dey sends Duchess bunches of roses big as your head, gets flowers for deir coats, puts on dicers, mitts, and toppers, and sends me wit deir cards to Miss Fannie. Dey makes a regular game of it, like dey was outside folks butting in for a call. But dere was no game about Little Duke. Say, he fixes his two eyes on Whiskers' whiskers, and blinks at 'em, solemn as a judge, till de gents yells wit laughing, and Miss Fannie chases 'em on deir way.

''Bless my soul, Chames,'' says Whiskers, when we was down-stairs, ''dat 's a fine boy.''

''Red as a rose is he,'' says Mr. Paul.

''De best ever, sir,'' I says.

"He is!" says Whiskers. "He arrived on de scene just in time to give Fannie a great deal to do and tink about," he says. "We 'll have him educated and make a gentleman out of him," he says.

"We 'll teach him to box, row, play football—make a regular scholar of him," says Mr. Paul.

"Tell Housekeeper," says Whiskers, "to invite your modder to dine wit her when she has seen Hortense and de baby."

"And invite Mrs. Murphy," says Mr. Paul.

"Soitainly," says Whiskers.

"Open a bottle," says Mr. Paul.

"Tell Housekeeper to treat 'em well," says Whiskers. "Dis is a happy event. Hortense has been wit us since Fannie was a school-goil."

"When I give her her foist bull pup," says Mr. Paul.

"Dat is immaterial," says Whiskers. "Your modder, Chames," he says, "is a grandparent, and grandparents has rights."

"Where would de parents be witout 'em?" says Mr. Paul.

"Dine wit your modder yourself, Chames," says Whiskers. "When you has dined I shall be glad to shake hands wit your modder."

"And Mrs. Murphy," says Mr. Paul.

"Wit everybody," says Whiskers. "I am sure," he says, "dis is a most suspicious occasion. I feel dat under de soicumstances we should make a gala day of it. I has not seen Fannie so happy in a year. Hortense was most considerate. I feel grateful to her."

"I feel a slight toist," says Mr. Paul.

Say, I was getting rattled wit all dis jolly, and was glad to pipe de old loidy and Murphy coming up in de station trap Coachy sent for 'em. Modder just gives me a kiss and scoots up-stairs. But Murphy! You should seen her! She was too grand to move fast. She had a fedder in her bonnet a mile high, black mitts witout fingers, a green shawl, and a poiple dress. She had a

stitch in her side, and her nose in de air; and when she 'd give Housekeeper a high-arm hand-shake she says, "Chimmie," she says, "would dis good leddy spare me de loan of a cup of tay? Me mout's full of cindher wit traveling in me railroad coach, and befoore I pays me reshpects to your good wife I 'd like to putt me hat on straight, and have a tasht of tay."

"Would n't beer suit you better?" I says.

" 'T is bad for de complexion," she says. "But if dis good leddy," nodding her fedders at Housekeeper, "has no tay ready, I 'll take beer."

Well, after dey 'd bote seen Duchess and Little Duke, Housekeeper asks 'em to her room for dinner.

" 'T is wondherful," says Murphy, "how much de little da-arling looks like his moddher."

"Like his fadder, you mean," says me old loidy.

"True for yez," says Murphy. "Like his moddher and faddher. I minds me dat

whin me own son Micky was de same blessed age, he had a cast in his eye like his faddher, and de same dimple in his chin I was renowned for in dose days. Will yez make a ca-arpenter of him, like your faddher befoore yez, Chimmie?''

''He 's to be a gentleman,'' I says.

''Faith, how can he,'' says Murphy, ''when de poor dear is half French? 'T will be a mercy if he don't grow up wit a forn brogue on him, and take to cooking tings, wit a white cap on top of his blessed head.''

''Have your manners about you, Mrs. Murphy,'' says me modder, getting her back up. ''Do you tink a son of my son would wear a white cap, and talk French? Him American born!''

''But above de Ha-arlem,'' says Murphy. ''Get him, Chimmie,'' she says, ''get him on de little old island of Manhattan befoore he begins to take notice, and yez may make an American of him yet. Sorrow de day I 'd see a gr-randchild of me old frin Mrs.

Fadden grow up a forner in Wistchister County.''

''Many 's de good American born off Manhattan Island,'' says me modder.

'' 'T is so,'' says Murphy. ''But dey stays off no longer dan dey can help. I was boorn in Ireland meself. But dat 's different: Ireland 's a training dishtrict for New York.''

''Have done wit your talk,'' I says, ''and eat your dinner. Whiskers is coming in to give a toast.''

''A toast, is it?'' says Murphy. ''An Irish leddy can toast de head off anny man, be he high or low. Mrs. Fadden, dearie,'' she says, ''may your can of happiness always have a low collar and a high waist.''

Well, dey gets chummy again, and when we 'd put de dinner out of business, Whiskers and Mr. Paul comes in. Dey bote passes out hand-shakes to de old goils, den Whiskers tells Housekeeper to hand out wine, and he 'd say a toast.

"I hopes me son knows his service," says me modder as Housekeeper pours fizz.

"He knows a number of tings," says Whiskers, "and some is useful."

"And some ornamental," says Mr. Paul.

"His faddher was de most ornamental ca-arpenter dat ever carried a dinner-pail to a ship-yard," says Murphy.

"Well," says Whiskers, "we is concerned upon dis happy day wit a younger generation," he says. "I proposes healt and long life to young Master Fadden."

"Name! name!" says Mr. Paul.

"Who is to be named," says Whiskers, "Chames Napoleon Emmet."

"Hoorah!" says me modder.

" 'T is a foine name," says Murphy. "Me own grandfaddher—resht his sowl!—carried a pike wit Emmet in de blessed year eighteen hoondhred and tree."

"Well I remember de day," says Mr. Paul.

"Let us drink," says Whiskers.

De bunch of us drinks, but Murphy

chokes. "What stuff is dis yez have give me? Is it a joke?" she says.

"It 's champagne," I says. "Drink hearty."

"It 's sour poison," she says. "I 'll dr-rink beer."

"Permit me," says Mr. Paul, handing her a glass of beer, polite as if she was a dead-swell dame.

" 'T is foine manners yez have, sir," she says to him.

"He is much in my company," says Whiskers.

"Your Honor could n't keep better company," she says to Whiskers. "Will your Honor lave me give you a toast?" she says.

"Charmed," says Whiskers.

" 'T is dis, den," she says: "May Chames Napoleon Emmet Fadden have a ha-ard fist for a foe, and an open hand for a frin, and never see de day he 'd not want his moddher to look him clear in de eyes."

"Hear, hear!" says Mr. Paul.

"Chames," says Whiskers, "it is for you to answer for your foist-born."

"Loidies and gents, all," I says, "you has done me proud for fair. Duchess and me has not made up our mind yet," I says, "wedder we 'll make de Little Duke a Senator or a Trust."

"Bote," says Mr. Paul. "Dey mixes as natural as Scotch and soda."

"But," I says, "if his Dukelets could talk now, and did n't tank you for dis jolly, I 'd show him anodder use for a slipper dan to keep a foot warm."

" 'T is de trut you speak," says Murphy.

"Derefore, loidies and gents, all," I says, "I wishes de top of de morning to you; and hoping all de enemies you has in de woild is in dis room now, I remains yours truly, Chames Fadden," I says.

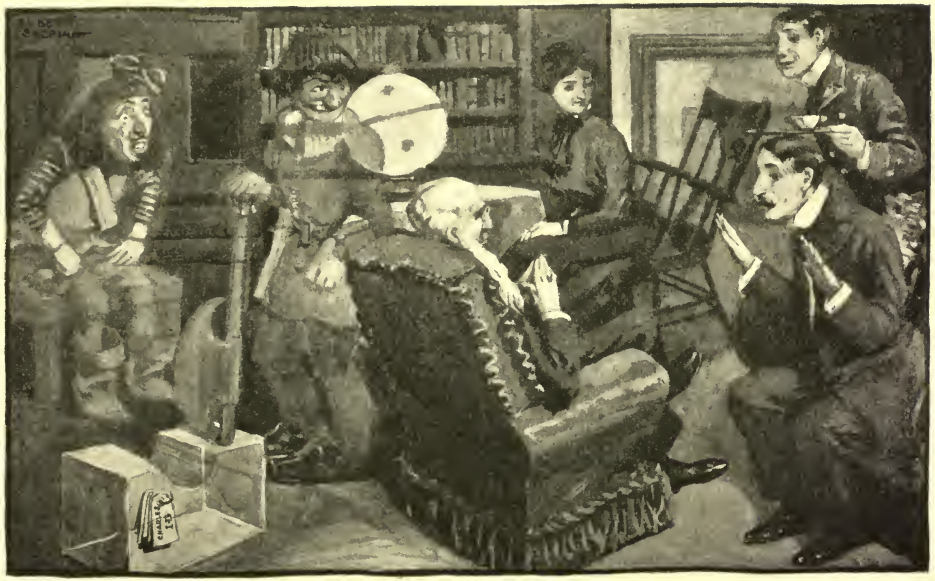
In de evening I took me modder and Murphy to de station, and den chases up to Duchess to tell her de news. She was tickled to deat when she hears dat de gents was going to educate Little Duke. "If we has

not to spend for his school,'' she says, ''all de money I saves from our wages, and de tips I touches you for, it will be enough to keep him from woik, and he can be a poet,'' she says.

De long green I earns for boxing wit Mr. Paul going to make my kid a poet! Duchess tinks she 'll make him a poet, because he looks like one now—barring dat he 's a bit shy on hair.

XXIV

CLASS DISTINCTIONS



"Alas!" says Mr. Paul: "alas! Poor Charles!"

XXIV

CLASS DISTINCTIONS

IT seems to me,'' says Whiskers, ''dat de district attoirney will soon find himself in de clutches of de law.''

''He soitainly will,'' says Mr. Paul. ''Den we 'll see how he likes de medicine he hands out to odders.''

''De idea,'' says Whiskers, ''of his saying dat he 'd enforce de law, even if it pulls down de administration!''

''I never see such a fellow,'' says Mr. Paul. ''Just because he has de law on his side, he tinks he 's a bigger man dan Mr. Low.''

''He 's no better dan an upstart,'' says Whiskers. ''He has no more respect for de administration dan—dan—''

''Dan he has for law-breakers,'' chips in Mr. Paul.

"I did not mean exactly dat," says Whiskers, blinking.

"Neider did I," says Mr. Paul. "I only said it."

"It is bad enough," says Whiskers, "to have de city filled wit defiers of de law; but if we is also to have men in office who defies de administration, New York will be punished by Providence for its wickedness."

"As Chames would say: New York is to de bad. Anyway," says Mr. Paul, "here 's my steemed fren, President Eliot of Harvard, telling us dat New York is de ugliest city dat ever happened. Yet, at de same time, so many people is trying to butt into New York every day dat de railroads can't handle 'em. Dat does n't prove President Eliot wrong—notting could do dat—but it does prove dat Americans has give up de worship of de beautiful for de worship of de ugly. Den, again, we is told by a most respectable autority dat dere is no longer any such ting as society in New York, because everybody lives so far from his doc-

tor, and his minister, and de ice-man, dat society is no longer possible. It is a depressing subject. Mrs. Burton, will you cheer me wit anodder cup of tea?''

Miss Fannie pours him anodder cup—say, he 's getting to be a regular joss at de tea game—and she says, ''All de same,'' she says, ''New York has to give up de heavens above, de eart beneat, and de tunnels under de eart, for railroads to carry people about; and I fancies dat many of dose people has social duties to call 'em around.''

''Dose is middle-class people,'' says Whiskers. ''Everyting on eart is done for de middle class. Dey fills de restaurants, hotels, teeaters. Our clubs, even, is not free from 'em.''

''Sure,'' says Mr. Paul. ''Even our churches is not safe from 'em.''

''Quite right,'' says Whiskers, not seeing de smile Mr. Paul and Miss Fannie was having at him. ''De upper class gets notting.''

''Notting on eart,'' says Mr. Paul. ''De

middle class has even run up de price of terrapin, so dat it is beyond de reach of de highest soicles of society."

"We upper class," says Whiskers, "has asked but one ting of New York: to keep tradesmen's wagons off Fift Avenoo. But what do de arrogant aldermen give us?"

"De merry ha-ha," says Mr. Paul. "Tradesmen should be kept not only off de Avenoo, but off de eart."

"I will not go wit you as far as dat," says Whiskers. "I am a conservative man, sir. I believe all classes has deir rights. Commercial and professional people has deir uses. We must not be too hard upon 'em. But let 'em not presume too much. Witin a mont I has attended sales of pictures, of Chinese porcelain, of tapestry. What did I see?"

"What, sir?" says Mr. Paul, looking as solemn as Little Miss Fannie when she studies her spelling-book. "What, sir?"

"Why, sir," says Whiskers, "I saw middle-class men buy all de best stuff dat was

offered; paying prices dat was wicked, and keeping de few of us upper-class collectors what was dere from buying anyting wort carrying away. It is shameful, sir."

"It is not to be endured," says Mr. Paul.

"A man of my modest income is now no better dan a beggar in New York," says Whiskers. "A hundred tousand a year is no longer enough to maintain a gentleman."

"I finds difficulty," says Mr. Paul, "in maintaining my dignity on half dat sum."

"Our dignity is all dat de middle class has left us," says Whiskers.

"Dey would take dat from us, if it was for sale," says Mr. Paul. "It is de fault of our system of government. We lost a grand chance when Prince Henry was here. We should trun him de offer of a million a year to stop wit us and been our king. Den we would had some decent laws. Any one convicted of paying more dan twenty-five dollars a dozen for terrapin should be hanged."

"I fear you would go too far," says

Whiskers. "Such extreme measures would be open to objections."

"True," says Mr. Paul, "but we could hang de objectors also. De upper class is entitled," he says, "to some privileges."

"I doubt," says Whiskers, "if we would be allowed to enjoy our privileges, even if we changed our form of government to a monarchy. History teaches dat de middle class—de bourgeoisie—has a habit of doing a stunt of hanging, or beheading, deirselves."

"Alas!" says Mr. Paul; "alas! poor Charles, poor Louis, sweet Antoinette, and dear Lady Jane! Dere is notting for us superior beings to do but to learn to suffer, and go witout terrapin and tapestry. De middle class runs our governments—national, State, and city. It controls Wall Street, conducts our teeaters, and most of our seats of learning. Sir, if I were a fadder, I should not know where to send my son to be educated. Where could de poor dear child go witout having to meet cubs

from middle-class homes? Even at Harvard dere are sons of millionaire nobodies, middle-class men of de banks, de exchanges, de marts, hiking to and fro, witout fear or shame, taking honors in Greek, foot-ball, French, and fencing. Sir, my tears flow for de poor dear child who would have to grow up in ignorance, or else struggle tru life enlightened only by such education as I could impart on manners, morals, and ping-pong."

"You are bote talking a great deal of nonsense," says Miss Fannie. "Where did all dis talk of classes in America start from? And who defines de classes? Why are we not middle class? We are not rich."

"My daughter," says Whiskers, "I hope you will not treat dis subject lightly."

"Mrs. Burton," says Mr. Paul, "you ask if we is not middle class, and in de same breat you disclose de reason which makes us upper class—we is not rich. Your fadder makes no secret dat his income is but one hundred tousand a year. Mine is but

half dat—if such a foolish sum may be dignified by de name of income. If it was not dat in all odder respects we is distinguished as upper-class people, our poverty alone would fix our status."

"Paul," she says, "you is not serious."

"I am solemn," he says. "De middle class has all de money in days like dese, when every door is barred wit gold, and opens but to golden keys. Dey pays for a horse what I has to live on a whole year. Dey buys yachts dat cost enough to produce more dan my income. Dey has made de teeater and opray so expensive dat only dey can afford to see all de best performances. Dey has run up de cost of living at foist-class hotels until, if popular-priced inns for upper-class folks is not open soon, we will have no place to lay our heads, when in town for a day or two, unless we opens up our town houses for de poipose. Dere was a time dat a poor upper-class man could at least find exclusive and genial society in de United States Senate at a price

witin de means of an aristocrat's poise. Is it so now? No. Like terrapin, objects of art, and all odder necessaries of life, de price of seats in de Senate has been advanced so much dat only de middle class can afford 'em. What is dere left for us to do? Where can we toin? Our exclusive clubs invaded, our seaside cottages captured, our—''

''But we have our own homes,'' says Miss Fannie.

''A few of us,'' says Mr. Paul. ''But how long can we afford to keep 'em? Even now de broker of a middle-class billionaire is demanding dat I put my own price on my humble cottage on de Sound.

''Very well,'' says Miss Fannie, wit a laugh, ''you can get such a price for it dat you will be able to buy yachts, horses, and terrapin, and stop scolding.''

''To be sure I could,'' says Mr. Paul, ''but do you not see dat den I would lose de right to consider myself an upper-class swell? Shall I sacrifice de distinction? No.

Den I would be no better dan a middle-class poisson."

"Paul is right, me dear," says Whiskers. "Dere is but one ting for us to do. De comforts and decencies of life are, you may say, now wholly monopolized by de middle class. Oh, de villain dat paid a tousand dollars for dat lovely vase I bid nine hundred and ninety for! We can but suffer in silence and dignity; but, as Paul says, presoive our class distinction. Aldough we has but a crust to eat and a cup of water to quench our toist, yet let us not forget we are what mere gold cannot buy."

"Hear, hear!" says Mr. Paul, and he got up to go.

"Come back to dinner, Paul," says Whiskers. "De keeper of dat little island I bought in Chesapeake Bay has sent me up de finest lot of canvasbacks I ever see. I know you is fond of 'em."

"I likes 'em better dan terrapin," says Mr. Paul, passing Miss Fannie de ghost of a wink.

"And me London wine agent has just sent me a little more of dat vintage Burgundy you liked so much. We 'll have a bottle of dat," says Whiskers.

"You is very kind," says Mr. Paul. "Such a crust and cup of water, underneat de bough of your electric candelabra, is paradise enow."

Well, when I goes up-stairs to tell Duchess about de talk and have a bit of a game wit Little Duke—say, he 's getting so strong now I guess dey 'll let me lift him pretty soon—she says to me, "I do not know about de classes in dis country, Chames, but I tink our folks must be real aristocrats."

"Sure," I says, "but how do you know?"

"Because," says Duchess, "if Miss Fannie was not sure of her place as an aristocrat she could not afford to be like a sister to me—her maid. She 's friendlier to me dan was de paid noisse she has just sent on her way."

XXV

SOME SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS

Hypatia disturbing herself.

XXV

SOME SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS

"SIR," says Mr. Paul, "a new revolution stares us in de face."

"Bless my soul!" says Whiskers, noivously, "I never see such times," he says. "Dere is revolutions every day."

"De whole woild revolves," says Mr. Paul.

"What is it now?" says Whiskers. "Is de rules of ping-pong changed, or is de Golf Association going to adopt a regulation ball?"

"Greater, even, dan such great tings," says Mr. Paul. "Civilized man is drove to revolt against de Starch Trust. De results will be so many and expansive," he says, "dat de mental vision of even de wisest cannot foresee all."

"What 's up?" says Whiskers. "I has no stock in de Starch Trust, but I hope de Attoiney-General has not fired a bill of complaint against it. I tink dat de Attoiney-General better stick to his business, and not be meddling wit lawsuits in de courts. Explain yourself," he says.

"Have anodder cup of tea," says Miss Fannie.

"Tanks," says Mr. Paul, giving me his cup. "I will explain, sir," he says. "De biggest laundry in New York has hoisted de price for doing men's collars from twenty-four to toity cents a dozen."

"Police!" says Whiskers. "Has your laundress struck for more wages, Fannie?" he says.

"It is not wages," says Mr. Paul, "it is starch. Since man, in a delirium of fatuity"—you would n't believe it, but dose was de very woids he used!—"took to wearing a double-band collar, de added use of trust-price starch has caused de bulge in laundry rates. Be we slaves, or be we freemen!"

"But what of de revolution?" says Miss Fannie. "Dat 's what I 'm excited about," she says, toining her head so she would n't see Little Miss Fannie's spoon in de jam, what she 'd said de Little One could n't have no more of.

"Madam!" says Mr. Paul, "de mind of de philosopher can neider be rushed tru de center, nor toined at de ends. It must proceed in order and in dignity. Let us consider man," he says.

"Let us," says Wily Widdy.

"For cruel years," says Mr. Paul, "man has constricted his neck in a single, and lately in a double, steely-starched band of linen. De laundries could n't stand for de double collar at de old price, hence," he says, "de hoist in rates. Dat, loidies and gents," he says, "was a act of deep and wide interest; de final toin of de screw which will make man rebel, and free himself from de bondage yoke of starch forever. Hurrah!" he says.

"Is man to go witout no collar, like a crank on de golf links?" says Whiskers.

"Your question, sir," says Mr. Paul, "brings me to de very point of me discourse. If, to pay our laundry bills, we must give up de double-shuffle collar, sober reflection will lead us to do a better stunt still: we will declare ourselves free from not only de double band, but from any such bondage whatever. And, sir, lo! de male human neck again will know de joy of lovely woolen collars, soft linen, silk—even lace!"

"Bah," says Whiskers. "How would I look wit a lace collar tangled in me whiskers?"

"Dat is not all," says Mr. Paul. "Being free men once more, made bold by victory, we shall also shed de tortoise-like shield which has too long ex—excor—"

Wait, I 'll get out dat woid if I break a toot. "Which has too long ex-cor-i-a-ted" —whew!—"our unhappy bosoms, and laugh de Starch Trust to scorn."

"Stop, stop!" says Miss Fannie. "If you men kill de starch business what will poor woman do about her petticoats?"

"Do!" says Mr. Paul. "Retoin to de limp simplicity of de Greeks. Who," he says, "can picture Hypatia disturbing her own lectures on Neo-platonics wit de creaking of her starched petticoats? Would Paris have eloped wit Helen if he had to check a dozen trunks of her starched linen; even if he was going to Troy, de home of de laundry? How would Cleopapatric's robe of clot' of gold, which me fren Plutarch describes in his society notes, look, after it had been a few times on de ironing-board. Mark Antony would n't stand for it!"

"Bravo!" says Widdy. "I shall order a tunic of poiple and fine linen, and practise walking in scandals."

What 's dat? Sandals? Yes, I guess dat was de woid. But, my, my! tink of de langwudge I has to remember!

"You has not yet named de revolution dat will do de most for civilization," says Miss Fannie.

"I has only stopped for a cup of tea," says Mr. Paul. "Name yours."

"It 's dis," she says, passing him his fift cup. "It 's de growing custom of dis very ting—de five o'clock tea."

"Growing?" says Whiskers. "Why growing? Americans has always had five o'clock tea."

"Dat 's just like you Van Courtlandts," says Mrs. Harding. "Whatever you do, you tink all America must do. De five-o'clock is a custom wit very few Americans."

"You astonishes me!" says Whiskers.

"Mrs. Harding is right," says Mr. Paul, who had his long-talk stop pulled full out. "De five o'clock tea in dis country has been to de bad."

He did n't say just dose woids, but a short-arm reporter could n't cop all his langwudge. I give most of it to you pretty straight; but if I did n't renig sometimes I 'd get wheels in me coco.

"Our national tardiness," Mr. Paul goes on, "in respect to de afternoon tea habit may express our aversion from de whole

subject of tea, born of an early experience which must not be named in dis blessed season of international amity."

"But," says Miss Fannie, "de custom has had a great boom lately."

"De boom struck our agreeable frens de French before it did us," says Mr. Paul.

"It did," says Miss Fannie, wit a smile. "Dey invented for it de winsome name of *le fiv'oclocque*. I remember how puzzled I was in Paris to be asked to *fiv'ocloquer à quatre heures*."

Say, get dose woids spelt de way Duchess wrote 'em for me on dis poiper. Dat 's right.

"I am so glad," says Widdy, "dat Paul has come out strong for temperance."

"I was always a temperate man," he says. "So is every man what drinks tea in de afternoon. Let us," he says, "let us consider who it is in our large cities dat supports de 'foist-class' bar-rooms. Is it not de prosperous commercial and professional gents?"

"I recalls," says Whiskers, "dat in me younger days de class you speak of had, on Broadway and de Avenoo, what was known as a cocktail route."

"Exactly," says Mr. Paul. "And why? Such gents mostly quits woik at four o'clock. Not having a date to go home and take tea wit deir folks at five, dat hour still finds 'em talking business in places where it is our curious national trait dat somebody must always be asking, 'What will you have?' If men will go home from deir offices for a cup of tea, instead of to cafés or clubs for cups of someting else, dey 'll be better acquainted wit deir families, and improved in manner and morals."

"To have lived to hear Paul preach reform," says Widdy, "makes me content to die."

"Oh, his preaching is n't so bad as all dat!" says Whiskers.

"I did n't mean it quite dat way," she says. "Now may I have my say about social revolutions, too?"

"I moves magnanimous consent," says Mr. Paul.

"I refers," says Widdy, "to de passing of de bud as a big social factor. She has been a pest. I see dat de King and Queen of England is to make her go 'way back and sit down: take her proper place where she used to be."

"And a very important place it was," says Mr. Paul. "Before de Young Poisson took command of society she was a big force in art—fortifying it against de hideous assaults of realism."

"Bless us!" says Whiskers. "How 's dat?" he says.

"Easy!" says Mr. Paul. "Once, de modest beauty of de young unmarried woman lent sweetness to de poet's sigh, de musician's strains; brightened de painter's palette; softened de pencil of the woiddy novelist. But can de poet get inspiration from de young poisson who is an autority on bridge whist; who has shoulders and arms like her brodder's; who answers de poet's

sigh wit her views on de uses of a niblick in a sand bunker?''

''Your woids is nonsense, Paul,'' says Widdy, ''but your meaning is good sense. De young goil has boomed into society lately at such a rate dat plain, old-fashioned folks like me has been sent to de benches. If de King and Queen had n't put a stop to de nuisance I was going to take me knitting to de next ball I go to and keep meself engaged making stockings for caddies. It was de only engagement dere was in sight for me.''

''Do so,'' says Mr. Paul, ''and I 'll take along a shingle and whittle out a cup defender for de Little One.''

''You two doing anyting useful would cheer de nations of de eart,'' says Whiskers.

''But,'' says Miss Fannie, ''when my little goil grows up won't it be proper for me to take her to parties?''

''Me dear,'' says Mrs. Harding, ''by dat time de young goil will be in command again. De question will be wedder it is

proper for her to take you to parties. Don't worry," she says.

Well, soon as I gets a chance I chases to Duchess to tell her what de folks was gabbling about. She likes to hear. It was a great day, and Duchess had Little Duke out in de grounds letting him see de foist robbins. Say, dey is a chesty boid. So is Little Duke.

Duchess listens to me story, den she says: "As for tea, it is medicine; and de only French what drink it is traitors—dey loves de English! As for de loidies Mr. Paul says did n't wear starched petticoats, dey was not French; so dey don't count. As for young goils bossing society, dey don't—in France."

Den I carries baby in for her, and when I calls him "kiddie" he gives me de glad eye. He 's American, all right, anyway. What?

XXVI

KITCHEN AND OTHER CABINETS

Theory of the movements of the peoples.

XXVI

KITCHEN AND OTHER CABINETS

"IF de new Secretary of de Navy wore eyeglasses he would look like President Roosevelt," says Whiskers, who was piping a picture in a poiper.

"Dat is part of de President's game," says Mr. Paul. "Dis new cabinet officer looks like de President witout glasses, de next new cabinet officer will look like a pair of glasses witout de President, de next one will look like a bronco, de next like a Rough Rider hat, de next like a book on 'Wild Animals I has Scared to Deat,' and so on. When de cabinet is all new de members will be raced past a given point at de rate of one hundred yards in ten seconds. De result is expected to please old and young alike, for it will produce a moving picture

dat will look like de President out for a stroll. In dis way Mr. Roosevelt will have a cabinet dat will be useful as well as ornamental. When de President wishes for to appear in two places at one time, he will go to one himself, and at de odder de cabinet will appear on a platform, running around in a soicle as fast as ever dey can. De effect will be de same at bote places, or money retoined at de box office."

"Witout nonsense," says Miss Fannie, "what is de cabinet for?"

"De cabinet," says Mr. Paul, "is as much witout nonsense as me. De poiposes of de cabinet is many. For instance," he says, "one cabinet officer is busy keeping de general of our army away from our war."

"How 's dat?" says Whiskers, who always gets leery of Mr. Paul when he talks of de gents in Washington.

"It 's dis way," says Mr. Paul. "A fellow named Miles is de general. It 's no credit to him dat he is—he could n't help it. He never done notting to get de job;

never done notting, anyway, dat I ever hears of, except to fight and bleed for his country. Well, sir, in de course of nature, not having de decency to bleed to deat on de several times he had de chance, he lands at de head of de army. He 's a meddlesome poisson; and just because he knows how to fight he gets tired waiting for de Philippine war to be over, so says he 'll take a run down dere, mix up wit de scrap, and end it.

"Dat was where Miles got de surprise of his life. Tousands of patriotic campaign contributors all over de country sets up a holler, sir, dat was most pitiful to hear. 'What!' says dey, 'let Miles meddle in dis war, and end it while we is selling de government canned beef, flour, shoes, close, horses, ships? Cut off our infant contract, while dere is a surplus in de Treasury! Nay, nay!' dey says.

"So de cabinet gets togedder, and says: 'Who 's Miles? What State does he boss? What delegates does he own? What 's dis

fellow's pull? Harvard? No. He was a mere hard-riding, rough-fisted fighter for de Union when he might have been at college. Away wit him! To de woods! Him end de war? What for? Has de army contractor no rights? Well, well!'

"So, sir, dis rude poisson, Miles, gets de frozen front; is told to mind his business and quit getting gay."

"But," says Miss Fannie, "I taut we wanted to have de war ended."

"Me dear Mrs. Burton," says Mr. Paul, "has you considered de consequences of ending de war to once? Why, madam," he says, "if it was not for de prompt and heroic action of de cabinet, dis impertinent Miles would have took a *paseo* to our Far East neck of woods, put de Philippine fighters out of business, and been back in San Francisco before General Funston had finished telling why de war could n't be ended so long as Senator Hoar was allowed de privilege of addressing de Senate. Dere is mighty little nonsense about de cabinet

already, and by de time it looks like a moving picture of de President dere will be no nonsense about it at all."

"I am glad," says Whiskers, "to hear you speak in dis sensible way about dat poisson Miles. I recalls, now dat you mention him, dat a former cabinet kept him from Cuba, and sent instead de dignified Shafter to lead our army in de cane-field. De best interests of our country requires dat a hustling, fighting general like Miles should be kept away from war so long as dere is danger dat de common people may be carried so far by deir entusiasm as to get up a ill-bred hurrah for him for President."

"You speak like a statesman, sir," says Mr. Paul. "When de common people is aroused in de manner you suggest de price of delegates not only goes up to a point dat is scandalous, but it is hard woik to make 'em stay bought. Prevention is better, and it is also cheaper, dan cure; and economy in delegates lies in keeping down de cost of production."

"I said notting about cost," says Whiskers, getting chesty.

"Pardon me, sir," says Mr. Paul, "but was we not talking politics?"

"Indeed you is," says Miss Fannie, "and I forbid it."

"It would be all right," says Whiskers, "if Paul would n't pretend to agree wit me, and den switch off on some of his annychistic nonsense."

"May we have some tea?" says Mr. Paul.

Dat was n't what I was going to tell you about; but when our folks talks what dey calls politics I wonders if dey is on de level, or is only romping around de track for deir healt. To listen to 'em you 'd tink dey believed dat men in office makes politics, instead of men in politics making de men in office, which is de way it is for fair. Listen: de boy dat rides de Suburban Handicap winner gets carried off de track in a horseshoe of roses. You 've seen it done. Willies and women cheer him, sporty lads buy him wine, and if he goes to de teeater,

people rubber to see him like he was de champeen middle-weight, or some real ting like dat. But he 's only de office-holder. De horse he rode was "good politics"; and de man what nobody knows, de trainer who made de horse fit for de race, who put de boy up on de back of de horse—why, he 's de politician. See?

But I was going to tell you: when dey gets settled for tea Miss Fannie says, "We is going back to town."

"Is we?" says Whiskers, histing his eyebrows. "Why?" he says.

"Because," says she, "aldough I hates to live in town, I hates woise to pass all me time engaging soivants. I has to go where dey goes."

"I knew it!" says Mr. Paul. "I has long had a teeory," he says, "dat de big movements of peoples and nations, which has made and changed de maps of de woild a dozen times, was caused by soivants. I intend," he says, "to write a book on de subject. I shall prove dat England, for in-

stance, was not settled by half-civilized tribes following de movements of wild game, as de old books teaches us, but by big colonies of patient peoples following de movements of deir soivants. De same,'' he says, ''wit Rome, wit Egypt. It was not love of conquest, of gold, of adventure, dat has took people far from deir own firesides and whist clubs, to wander up and down de face of de eart. No! it has been a taste for travel on de part of deir soivants.''

''Dey was n't like me, den,'' says Wily Widdy. ''Soivants has been trying to force me to live in New York dese two or tree hundred years, but I defy 'em. I has a private 'phone to de employment office, I has set up a regular passenger line between here and town, and I keeps a string of soivants coming and going all de time. Except me own maid and groom and gardener, I has n't for years had a soivant long enough to know his name, or hers. But I 'll live where I want to,'' she says, ''even if I has to starve to deat to do it.''

"You is braver dan me," says Miss Fannie, "for I am conquered. I 'm made meek trying, witout results, to keep enough maids in de house to make it fit to live in. It is too early in de season for 'em to fancy de country, and dey is boss."

"We must have a law on de whole class of 'em," yells Whiskers. "If any part of de United States is n't good enough for 'em we 'll pass a law to keep 'em out of de whole country."

"We has a law now," chips in Mr. Paul, quiet like, "what keeps out some of de soivant class."

"What law?" says Whiskers.

"Sand-lot," says Mr. Paul.

"Bah!" says Whiskers. "We must have no laws to keep soivants out of de country."

"But, papa!" says Miss Fannie, "you just said—"

"Never mind what I said," says Whiskers, getting red. "Paul laid a trap for me. If I was President Roosevelt I would lasso all de Congressmen who is trying to

pass more anti-Chinese laws, and drag 'em all to jail."

"De Chinese must go!" says Mr. Paul.

"Dey must come!" says Whiskers. "We needs about two or tree millions of 'em to settle de soivant question. Can we have 'em? No. Why? Laws! De whole soivant-employing class of dis wretched country," he says, "is de victim of a phrase—'Chinese cheap labor.' It is all a wicked case of give a dog a bad name."

"But Chinese labor is bad for de country," says Mr. Paul. "I has a fren in California who lost his seat in Congress because he saved his vineyard wit Chinese labor."

"Don't talk to me of California," says Whiskers. "I own land dere. Dat unfortunate State is fifty years behind what it ought to be for lack of Chinese labor. Everybody but de Sand-lotters wants Chinese. Dey is docile, capable, and cheap."

"Sir," says Mr. Paul, "dis is annaky! Has de Scandihoovian, coming to our hos-

pitable shores at de rate of tousands a day, no rights as American citizens? Dey is not docile, but obstreperous. Dat 's what we need for de strenuous life of de kitchen. Dey is incapable. So much de better. De more incapable dey is, de more of 'em we requires to do de woik. Dey is not cheap, but we want no cheap labor dat can't vote. Tink," he says, "of de tousands of Scandihoovian toddlers at home in Scandihoovia! Dey all expects to come here when dey is grown up and get twenty dollars a mont, wit board and lodging, for dusting de parlor furniture."

"For not dusting it," says Miss Fannie.

"Very well," says Mr. Paul, "for not dusting it. Would you, sir, blight deir future by importing a horde of Chinese who would dust it for ten dollars a mont? Perish de taut!" he says. "De principles of protection—"

"Politics!" cries Miss Fannie.

"It was Paul's fault," says Whiskers. "He gives a political twist to everything."

"If ever I says anodder woid," says Mr. Paul, "may I—"

"Have a cup of tea," says Miss Fannie.

When I tells Duchess what de folks was talking, she taut awhile, den she says, "M'sieu Paul is right," she says. "If Miss Fannie could had all de Chinese soivants she wants down here we would not be going back to town next week."

"What 's de answer?" I says.

"It is," she says, "dat I wishes to do some short-close shopping in town next week, and now dat we has de baby I could not shop in town unless we all moves in."

"Sure," I says. "If it 's up to shopping for de kiddie de Chinese must stay gone."

Say, de Little Duke is great! He 's going into short close pretty soon, and den I 'll get a set of boxing-gloves for him. What?

XXVII

EDUCATION AND PROPOSALS

"De center of gravity has moved from Greece to Boston."

XXVII

EDUCATION AND PROPOSALS

"CHAMES," says Mr. Paul, handing me a pair of boxing-mitts, "let us toin our minds to de cause of higher education. Let us," he says, holding out his hands for me to lace his mitts, "let us adorn our brows with de laurels of Pure Reason: no hitting in clinches, two-minute rounds, two minutes' rest; for de tea-drink habit has made me fat, and scant of breat. Time!" he says.

Well, we gets togedder wit our mitts, and mixes up pretty lively; but in de two minutes' rest he caught enough breat to go on wit his talk.

"I has obsoived," he says, "dat de grand revival of academic training has struck a new gait dat beats de limit. De deciples

of Sophy Clees and Sock Tees would look like farm-hands at a spelling-bee alongside de youts of our fair land in dis present year of grace.''

''What 's happened 'em?'' I says.

''Dey is fired by a boining yoining for education,'' he says, ''dat de floods of Harlem River could not quench. Already,'' he says, dere is a movement for Pennsy to row at New London, for Harvard to row wit Cornell on Lake Cayuga. De salaries of good rowing coaches has gone up so high dat several professors of higher mat'matics has gone into training for de job of coach. Columbia is said to have a new left tackle dat could put a runaway trolley-car out of business; at Princeton de midnight oil is consumed by large parties of undergraduates, toasting a new pitcher dat can put a coived ball trough a two-inch plank. De University of California has a broad-jumper what does n't have to take de ferry from Berkeley to San Francisco—he jumps de bay! From all our seats of learning,'' he

says, "comes woid dat de onward march of intellectual life has put its hand to de plow: wit swords leaping from scabbards and de trottle trun wide open, all sail is clapped on, and, springing from crag to crag, de soaring flight of mental progress wins in a walk! Time!" he says.

We gets togedder for de second round, and I lands a lovely upper progress on his jaw, but he counters wit a intellectual jolt on me ribs dat made me glad de rounds was a minute shy of Queensberry rules.

"I suppose," says Mr. Paul, when we stops study to recite, "I suppose dat de recent remark of a Fourhundredess dat no mug can be a gent dat has not had a college education, has give a mighty impetus to dis glorious revival of letters."

Say, since Mr. Paul has got de five-o'clock-tea habit his langwudge is getting woise and woise. I taut he was de limit for woids when he was playing de small-bottle game, but he was a dumb waiter den alongside de langwudge he sports now. Sure!

"Let us consider," he says, "why it is dat to be a real gent a man must have a college education. When Prince Henry launched de Geezer's yacht de gents what partook of de launching lunch likewise partook of all de china and silver. Could dey have done it if dey had not been college trained? No. De ungentlemanly caterer, and his hundred waiters, made a desperate defense of de spoons and plates, but, alas! dey had no college training. De gents smashed trough deir center, tore deir defense to tatters, and, wit a superior knowledge of de game, swiped all de silverware, crockery, and napkins, leaving de ungentlemanly caterer a bankrupt."

And dat 's no joke, too.

In de toid round I gets in a genteel jab over Mr. Paul's heart, and den swings a wise right at his neck, but he blocks it like a gentleman, and puts bote mitts on me face like a bachelor of arts. I clinched to save me Pure Reason from getting bote eyes closed, and sparred a bit for wind, and to

tink how could I put his intellectuals out of business before he 'd rapped me coco off me shoulders. I made a bluff at a high-minded lead for his peepers, and, when he had his hooks up to block, I trun in a real saucy punch to his solo plexer. Dat dismissed de class.

When Mr. Paul got wind enough to go on wit his game of talk he says: "It is to de bad, Chames, dat you has settled in life as a gentleman's man. If fate had provided a college education for you, added to de force and character of your blows, notting could kept you out of de highest soicles of society. Did you land dat last expression of your gentility wit your left hand or your right? I do not appear to have been looking. But do not indulge," he says, "in vain regrets. If your son grows up as willing as you to take a punch in order to give one, he will be de foist gentleman in de land, provided you keep him out of society and odder mischief until he is well known as a middle-weight."

"Tank you, sir," I says. "I 'm teaching him his manners, and already he has quite a notion of boxing," I says. "What college is you and Mr. Van Courtlandt going to send him to?" I says.

"We must not make up our minds too soon," says Mr. Paul. "In sixteen or seventeen years de forum of belles-lettres may change its base. De Wisconsin crew is already doing good woik; California has a track team dat keeps de odder universities on de anxious seat. Witin a period of written history de center of gravity has moved from Greece to Boston. Tings gets a swifter move on in dese days. By de time your son is prepared for academic honors Ann Arbor or Chicago may have developed a system of philosophy what Sullivan nor Corbett never dreamed of. Let us wait wit minds open to every invention. In de near future gents may be wholly machine-made; and present professors of deadly langwudges merrily keep punching-bags in order, oil row-locks, inflate foot-balls, and odderwise promote academic activities."

My, my! but Mr. Paul is a corker at de game of talk. I 'm no farmer at copping his woids, but sometimes a slice of his langwudge is too rich for me coco. Den I makes good wit me own woids in straight English, so you don't miss any of his meaning. See?

I was telling you about us moving back into town till de wedder gets warm enough in de country to suit de soivants. We is here. We 'll just about get settled, and tings moving along like a rubber-wheeled ambulance, when we 'll all hike back to de long grass again. Wily Widdy won't have no town house, and only skips in for little visits. When we chases in Miss Fannie gives Widdy a invite to come along wit us for a week. But Widdy says, "Nay, nay."

"I can't stand for de city, Fannie," she says. "De only ting wort while doing in de city," she says, "is to go to de country. Anyway," she says, "I belong to de outdoor poor. Everyting I likes is done out of doors, and de country is just getting fit for living. Roads are right now for riding and driving, golf-links has been rolled,

tennis-nets stretched, yachts will soon be in commission. De city is only to shop in, and I 'm too poor to shop. I can't see, Fannie," she says, "why your fadder does n't marry me, and take de worry of poverty off me mind. I 'd let him give you twenty tousand a year, and wit de twenty tousand Burton left you, you ought to get along, for you are a economical body."

"Why don't you ask papa?" says Miss Fannie. "He 's de best-natured man in de woild, and not likely to refuse a loidy anyting in reason."

"Ask him!" says Widdy. "Why, me dear child!" she says, "I 've asked him two or tree times a year dese last four years. Not in so many woids, you know, but he poifectly understands."

"I did n't suppose he could be so hard-hearted," says Miss Fannie, wit a smile.

"He 's no harder-hearted dan his daughter," says Widdy.

"No?" Miss Fannie says, like she did n't tumble.

"No!" says Widdy. She was smiling, too, but all de same she was looking sharp to see did Miss Fannie have her guard up, for dey was sparring just as hard as Mr. Paul and me does. "No, for you refuses a standing offer every day," she says.

"Perhaps I 'm like papa," says Miss Fannie. "I may not be bright enough to understand proposals witout woids."

"Oh, lordy!" says Widdy, "de man can talk enough! Dere would be no lack of woids if you showed a sign dat he would be accepted if he proposed."

"Do you judge from papa?" says Miss Fannie. "Does he show no sign dat he is unwilling to hear your proposal in so many woids?"

Say, I taut tings was getting radder intimate; but dey talks right out in front of me, bote smiling and kind of watching each odder. But fine-haired dames like dat pair is too implicated—what 's dat? Yes, complicated—for yours truly. I taut dey would switch deir wire when de gents comes in—

dis was at five o'clock—but de foist ting dat Miss Fannie says, when she pours tea for Whiskers and Mr. Paul, was, "Mrs. Harding and me has been talking of manners of proposing marriage."

"It is a subject I has long give deep taut on," says Mr. Paul. "I has in mind writing a book on de manner of proposal among all people: bote civilized people and happy people. Among a soitain tribe of Nort-American Indian, when a squaw has made up her mind she asks de happy buck of her choice to put a ring in her nose."

"Very much de same in our set," says Widdy, "only dat de ring is put in de man's nose."

"True," says Mr. Paul. "But in one case de ring is visible, yet inflicts no pain; in de odder case de ring is invisible, yet—"

"What odder customs has you obsoived?" says Whiskers, chipping in.

"Among de shepherd class of Tibet," says Mr. Paul, "woman selects two or tree men, and marries 'em all alive."

"I taut it was boiling 'em alive in oil," says Miss Fannie.

"No," says Mr. Paul. "Dat practice we find among a more advanced people, farder East. It is a reform of de Tibetan custom, and was brought about by de Society for de Prevention of Cruelty to Husbands. In our new possessions, in de far fair East, some of our adopted fellow-citizens marry deir women slaves before dey sells 'em."

"A reversal of our citizens' custom of buying deir slaves before dey marry 'em," says Widdy. "Go on, Paul. Your book will sell."

"I hope so," he says. "I shall make an educational drama of it, also, for de uplifting of de stoige. I am much interested in de law among a curious people of Africa. Dere, a man in love must not say a woid till he gets some sign from de object of his devotion dat he will be accepted if he proposes."

"What is de punishment if he breaks dat law?" says Miss Fannie. "Is it deat?"

"Woise dan deat," says Mr. Paul. "He is banished from her society forever."

When I tells Duchess about Mr. Paul's funny stories she taut awhile, den she says, "M'sieu Paul is right not to propose of a suddenness. If he does Miss Fannie might say 'No,' den of a soitainty he would banished be."

"On your way!" I says. "Dey was talking about a tribe of Africa coons."

"Folks like ours," says Duchess, "sometimes of Africa talks, when it is of tings nearer home dey is tinking."

I wonder was Duchess right! Was Miss Fannie and Mr. Paul kind of sparking, when dey says dose tings about proposing? I don't know. I 'm not wise on woids, except dose dat means just what dey says. But Duchess is a wise goil. Sure.

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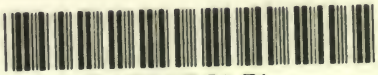

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